ABOVE THE RANGE

A STORY FOR GIRLS

THEODORA R. JENNESS

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ABOVE THE RANGE.



HE DREW A PISTOL FROM HIS BELT AND FIRED IT INTO THE AIR.

ABOVE THE RANGE.

A STORY FOR GIRLS.

BY

THEODORA R. JENNESS.

ILLUSTRATED BY GEORGE GIBBS.



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ABOVE THE RANGE.

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CONTENTS.

CHAP.		PAGE.
I.	The Bunch-grass Party	9
II.	A White Captive	23
III.	Great-grandmother's Ghost-lock	34
IV.	The Tattoo Artist	49
V.	Lilian's Joy	58
VI.	Clark's Disclosure	68
VII.	Myths	81
VIII.	Fasting	95
IX.	The Doughnut Raid	108
X.	The Young Military Lady	123
XI.	Resolutions	140
XII.	Mourning Gifts	153
XIII.	Gipsying	172
XIV.	Hieroglyphics	190
XV.	The Mystery Feast	208
XVI.	An Anti-Indian Act	219
XVII.	A Civilized Entertainment	234
XVIII.	Playing Stage-coach	252
XIX.	Lilian's Pursuit	271
XX.	Clark's Ordeal	285
XXI.	Alphonso	300
XXII.	Good-night and Good-by	314

ILLUSTRATIONS.

PAGE.

He drew a pistol from his belt and fired it into the air. *Frontispiece.* 24

Katy, Jane, and Hester wedged against the door to guard against intrusion 64

Colonel Mayo examined a gaily colored war bonnet . . . 124

Mario appeared upon his bronco brilliantly arrayed . . . 178

Big Eagle now rode slowly up and made a brief speech to the two men 218

ABOVE THE RANGE.

CHAPTER I.

THE BUNCH-GRASS PARTY.

"IT is not as it used to be," said Inez, looking down upon the range with discontented eyes. "To-morrow will be Sunday, and next day will be rations. If the agency had not been moved they would be setting up so many tents down there this afternoon. Hundreds of them. And our people would be there."

The dark-eyed girls and boys who sat with Inez in a semicircle on the bunch-grass by the mission stile turned their gaze upon the herdland, seeing in their mind's eye an alluring picture of the tented village that had come and gone as often as the new moon when the agency was but a mile away.

It was a charming fall day on the South Dakota plains. The round red sun was showering the range with mellow light. A blue mist hung above the distant buttes and drifted through the draws and coulees. The Missouri River bent and straggled in its shifting channel with its floating bars of

quicksand on the north and east, its muddy waters tinged with sapphire gleams. A narrow fringe of gold and scarlet foliage lay along the nearer side, and on the further side arose the bare black gumbo hills, a startling blot upon the scene, unsoftened by a vestige of the autumn glory lavished elsewhere.

"We should see our little sisters and our little brothers," Hester mused. "Round the camp should I be walking just now with the baby on my back."

"I should not be carrying a baby, for we have none," Nancy said; "I should have a puppy in my shawl. Maybe four or two, for we have always many puppies."

There was a quaint, soft accent in the speech of these Dakota children. They expressed themselves with much precision, yet with animation, and there was a loving stress upon their words as they alluded to the bygone days.

"My grandmother Three Braids would be there," said little Polly. "She would have a cowboy hat, and she would wear a soldier overcoat with very lots of buttons. Beeg and leetle, and so deeferent colors. Every time she find a button she sew it on her overcoat. She have a hundred when I came to school, one moon ago. They make it very preety, and so hard to leeft — thees way." Polly proudly gripped her hands and

tugged with labored breath, as if to raise a heavy weight.

There was a peal of laughter from the school girls as they thought of wrinkled Three Braids in the cowboy hat and army overcoat bedecked with countless buttons, sweltering in the balmy weather. Polly hung her head, chagrined at her mistake.

Lilian put her arm around the little girl, who sat beside her on the stile, and hugged her closely.

"Three Braids likes to save the buttons, and she knows just where they are when she has sewed them on her coat. The grandmother does nice beadwork, and she makes such splendid Indian dolls to give to little girls."

Polly raised her head and smiled, patting Lilian's hand in gratitude for her defense of the good grandmother. Then she slipped away to join the children playing teepe by the woodpile.

Lilian was a fair, slight girl with hazel eyes, long lashes, and a wealth of red-brown hair that curled in little rings upon her forehead. She showed no trace of Indian lineage, yet she was called a Sioux girl, and her Indian name was Miniwanca Swift Bird. The English name Lilian had been given her when she came to school nine years before, at about six years of age. She had but little of the Teton accent, though

its rippling intonation sometimes touched her clearly modulated speech.

Lilian wore a brown hat and a short blue jacket, while the hats and jackets of the other girls were lying in their laps or scattered on the grass. Her linsey-woolsey frock of plaided red and blue displayed no spot nor darn in contrast to the dresses of her mates, and every button was in place upon her neat kid shoes with patent leather tips.

"Ponies there would be for us to ride," dreamed Inez, longingly reverting to the joys of ration time.

"There would be a horse-race, and I should be winning knives and pistols with my bronco," said her brother Mario.

"Kee!" exclaimed a number of the girls in chorus, looking doubtfully at one another.

"That would be against the rule," objected Katy, "and you would be punished. Mr. Greely would not let you keep the knives and pistols, and would make you chop wood, after school, on ration day."

Mario raised a fist, then opened it, and sent his fingers flying toward the government school upon another hill, a mile or so away, in token of his disapproval of the discipline enforced by Superintendent Greely.

"There would be dogs — dogs — more dogs than ponies," said Baptiste. "What dog fights there would be!"

Lilian shuddered at the thought. "The Indian dogs are all so hideous, I cannot bear to look at them. Their legs are very short, and they have long, lean bodies, and are black and fierce. They have big heads and snarly hair that dangles in their eyes and makes them walk like blind dogs. When they mean to steal, they crouch down low and wriggle through the grass like snakes. They eat so much, the Indians don't have enough themselves."

"Tokee!" was the astonished cry, while many flashes from the bright black eyes were cast at Lilian.

"Hark to that!" exclaimed Inez. "Lilian thinks she is a white girl, and she thinks the Indians should have white dogs. She thinks that we should all be white. We are so hideous that she cannot bear to look at us. Ee-ah! what crooked eyes I have, and what a long nose, and such frightful teeth."

Inez was a fiery little beauty of fifteen. Her father had been a handsome Spaniard, and her Indian mother was noted for her comeliness in early youth.

Lilian laughed and tossed a plum at Inez as a peace-offering.

"I wish the Indians had such dogs as Mr.

Averill. They are so sleek and handsome, and they run like deer. See, they are coming from the fort with him — all ten of them. He has been to get the mail."

All eyes were turned upon the young superintendent of the mission, riding up the range upon a fine black horse. His dogs were coursing far ahead, a splendid greyhound leading.

"Ee! but they are swift," said Mario, sharing Lilian's admiration for the high-bred dogs. "Look — they are after something. To my eyes it is a beast much larger than a jack-rabbitt."

All were instantly observant of the game which had aroused the mettle of the dogs. It was a slouching creature with a swinging gait, though swift of foot.

"A coyote," presently descried Baptiste, who was full Indian, and could stretch his eyes beyond the outlook of the Spanish-Indian boy.

"Tokee!" cried Mario, "the dogs — how fast — they are the north wind in a blizzard. Mr. Averill is after them. He has his gun."

The bunch-grass party sprang upon its feet to watch the chase. The hunting instinct of the Indian had leaped to life in all. Lilian kept her seat, but felt a vivid interest in the hunt. "Hyre! hyu! hyu!" was the excited cry. The girls outcheered the boys.

The black horse caught the spirit of the chase, and sped with wondrous nerve.

The dogs pursued the animal across a reach of level prairie, gaining on it meanwhile. Crowded by the dogs, it darted up a rise and skimmed the margin of a coulee for some distance.

"Now they have it. It has dropped into the coulee, and the dogs have gone down after it," cried Mario. "They will catch it in the brush."

But presently the animal was seen upon the further margin. It had climbed the steep side, which the dogs could not attempt, and thus eluded them.

Mr. Averill was now within range of it, but pity for the struggling creature caused him to refrain from firing. He called his dogs and turned upon the track for home.

The group set up the Indian cry of defeat, "He-he-he-he!" (Alas! alas! alas! alas!) and Mario supplemented the lament by flinging the derisive shout in Mr. Averill's direction, "Ho'wo! Ho'wo! E'-ya-ha-he! E'-ya-ha-he!" (Come on! Come on! How brave you are! How brave you are!)

"Poor thing!" said Lilian, with a fluttering breath. "I'm glad he didn't shoot it, though coyotes are so mean. They sometimes chase the cattle on the range, and bite their hind legs till

they break the sinews. Then the cattle drop dead and the coyotes eat them."

"It is not as it used to be with coyotes," ruminated Baptiste when the bunch-grass party had resumed the semicircle. "Most of them the soldiers and the boys have killed or scared away."

"They will come back in great packs when the fort and boys' school are moved," predicted Mario. "You girls will hear them barking in the night. Even one will sound like many, for a coyote whirls round very fast and throws a bark all ways. And you will see them down there thick as buzzards when a blizzard there has been, feasting on the frozen cattle."

The girls looked down upon the sunlit range, thinking of its desolation when the snow was deep, and shrinking from the loneliness when there would be no brothers, cousins, and special friends upon the other hill.

"Glad am I that they have not begun to build the new schoolhouse at the agency," said Inez. "They will not move the boys this year."

"I hope the soldiers won't go, either," Lilian said. "There are such lovely ladies at the fort."

"Because they notice her, she thinks they are so lovely," tilted Inez, with a laugh. "She is always going to the fort with Mrs. Averill to get

petted. And she holds her head up high, and talks so brave, just like she never was afraid."

"You would not let the soldier ladies pet you," Katy said.

"No; I should do this way." Inez hid her face behind her hands, then peeped out coyly between her fingers.

"I should turn my back," feared Hester.

"I should hang my head," quaked Nancy.

"I should hold my head up," Katy braced her nerves to hope, "and say yes, ma'am, and no, ma'am, if they talked to me, but I should feel very scared and want to run and hide."

Katy had spent five years at Hampton, and was next to Lilian in the line of self-possession.

"Lieutenant Frisbie has been married, and his bride is coming to the fort," said Lilian, heedless of the little missile shied at her by Inez. "She is young and beautiful, they say. I hope I shall see her often, even if she doesn't talk to me."

Lilian cast a wistful look upon the little army post four miles away. She saw the long, white guardhouse and the commissary store quite plainly through the haze. Then she sent her eyes still further, gazing dreamily at the horizon.

"She has been in the great cities, New York and Washington, and she has been across the ocean. I have only been there and here."

Lilian looked toward the buttes, beyond which was the Indian camp where she had lived in early childhood with her foster parents. They had brought her to their log house on returning from a roving expedition in the autumn, thirteen years before, but in what way they obtained her was a mystery. They had adopted her to fill the place of their little daughter who had died not long before.

The Indian foster parents had been fond of Lilian, and had come to visit her quite often at the mission, camping in their teepe, and until her twelfth year she had spent a part of every summer in their cabin on the reservation. But the foster parents had both died, and now the mission was her constant home.

"I was in the great city of New York last summer, when I came from Hampton," Katy said. "I rode in a street car up above the top windows of the houses. And I hallooed into a little hole and held a funny thing up to my ear, and they heard me as far away as a two weeks' ride horseback, and they hallooed to me and I heard them."

"Kee!" exclaimed the girls and boys in concert.

They had heard before about the Hampton girl's experience with the elevated railway and the tele-

phone, but they could not believe the wondrous story.

"You are just cheating," Nancy said.

"No, I am very true. It cost nine dollars for all the Indian girls to halloo that dared to, but a rich white man paid for it. He wanted us to tell our people what great things the white men could find out how to do. But Irene Turtle Shell — she was a Crow Indian — turned her back to the little hole, for she thought it was bad medicine.

"And I saw the — Statue of — Liberty. She stands on an island near New York, with the water very far all around. She is the color of an Indian woman, and so-o ta-a-ll! If she was lying down out there, her feet would reach to the wood pile, and her head to the dog corral," was the wild guess.

"You said the chicken house when last you talked of her," corrected Inez.

"I cannot quite tell — there is not much difference. I climbed up, up the twisted stairs inside of her, till I was very scared, to the tip-top of her brains, and looked out through a hole in her crown. Many people can stand in her head and not get pushed."

"How grand she is," said Lilian, with eyes and cheeks aglow. "She holds a scroll in one hand, and a splendid torchlight in the other. Miss

Hartford says the hand that holds the scroll looks soft and dimpled, and the other very strong, as if it never would get tired of holding up the torch to light the world."

"Yes," said Katy; "and the forefinger of the strong hand is as long as a porch post, and she could not squeeze the thumb into a post hole."

"Tokee!" was the surprised rejoinder from the interested audience on the bunch-grass.

"The great city was very far down," pursued the sight-seer, "and the big stores looked so-o little, like the dog house. And the ships down on the water looked as if they did not move, when they were going very fast. I have sailed in a ship, and — I have been seasick."

She dropped her voice mysteriously.

"What is it to be seasick?" questioned Nancy, looking at the traveler with awed eyes, as if she gazed on one miraculously snatched from the jaws of death.

"You walk on the deck this way." Katy struggled to her feet and tottered on the sward. "And you try to get downstairs to lie down. But you are very sl-o-o-w" — she blindly clutched the air — "and you are sorry that you came." She said no more, but locked her hands despairingly, and showed her white teeth with a squeamish smile.

Katy had an Irish father, and a deal of mimicry was mingled with her Indian traits.

"When I went to Hampton I was nine birthdays," went on the brisk narrator, cheered by the attention of her hearers. "There was not a very little girl's class at the Indian school, so I went to a white children's school. The white boys were not polite to me. They pinched me with pins, and ran back of me and called me little redskin. There was an old soldier. He was drunk and he ran crooked, but he chased the boys and made them stop. I was crying when I came where my sister was, and I said I did not like to be at Hampton, and I wanted to go home very fast. But she said we must stay five years."

"Was your sister a long girl or a short girl?" Nancy asked.

"She was two moons after fourteen birthdays. Just my age last Christmas tree."

There was a sudden stir among the group, and every eye was turned toward a draw upon the west into which three horseback riders had descended. Shortly they emerged and rode along the level range in single file.

The girls and boys kept watch of them with keen, far-seeing eyes.

"Policemen!" Baptiste soon discovered, starting up.

All were now alert.

"Yes," said Inez. "I can see their uniforms."

"The one that rides first, on the white horse, is my father," Hester found ere long.

"And Peter Poor Shot's uncle is the one that rides last," Mario said.

"And who rides in the middle? Just like I am very blind," groped Nancy, who was suffering from a sty in aggravated form and had one eye tied up.

"Not a policeman, nor a man. One shorter," Mario perceived.

"Clark McKeag," said Inez in another minute.

"Clark?" said Lilian, springing from the stile. She held her hand above her eyes, looking down the range in some excitement.

"Back to school have the policemen brought him?" wondered Nancy.

CHAPTER II.

A WHITE CAPTIVE.

THE Indian policemen and their charge were riding rather swiftly, but their horses slackened speed as they came nearer, and before they reached the outposts of the mission grounds they dropped into a walk and scaled the hillside in a solemn line.

Upon arriving at the cattle gate some rods below the stile, the rear guard turned into the grounds and rode toward the dog corral, where Mr. Averill was shutting in the dogs.

As if to emphasize the grave occasion and convey a lesson to the watchful party at the stile, the policeman left in charge fell back and seized the bridle of the captive's pony, leading him a pace or two behind his own. The Indian did not turn his head nor move a muscle of his face as he approached the stile. He passed the party like a mounted statue, glancing neither to the right nor left.

The white boy whom he had in tow preserved a similar demeanor, imitating with remarkable fidelity the rigid aspect of his Indian captor.

This he did till he was close beside the stile, then suddenly he gave himself a fling and struck the ground, and with a bound or two was side by side with Lilian, who had fluttered back upon her perch.

"Kee! you must not do that," Hester warned in undertone. "My father thinks he has you on the pony."

Clark fired a wink from his audacious blue eye at the grim red deputy of law and order, who pursued the forced march toward the boys' school, apparently unconscious that his captive had escaped.

He rode on several rods, then broke into a trot. All at once he turned and looked upon the empty saddle; then he drew the reins and stopped as if in great bewilderment.

He wheeled about and rode back at a furious rate. The girls and boys who stood upon the grass fell back to clear the way. Lilian held her breath, but Clark was unconcerned.

As the Indian bore down upon the stile, he checked his horse so suddenly he threw him back upon his haunches, drew a pistol from his belt, and whirled it with a frightful scowl.

He fired it into the air, and quietly dismounted and began to shake hands with the girls and boys.

"How!" he said to each in cordial tones.

He grasped Clark's hand, and wrung it with special fervor.

"Be good boy. Go school. Study hard like Indian," was his gentle admonition.

Thereupon he left Clark to his own devices and followed Peter Poor Shot's uncle to the dog corral.

Clark turned to Lilian with a laugh.

"How!" exclaimed he, stretching out his hand.

She shook it somewhat gravely, but there was friendship in the grasp.

He then descended from the stile and went the rounds among the boys and girls, in emulation of the sociable policeman.

The girls were rather shy of him, but they cast admiring glances at the jaunty cowboy rig in which he had been captured on the range.

A light, soft hat, with marvelous rim, slouched gracefully upon his golden locks. A gray silk handkerchief with scarlet edge was knotted at his sunburnt throat. His flannel shirt of navy blue, which sagged upon the hips in genuine cowboy style, was girded with a leather belt, and leather leggings, with a row of fringe along the sides, incased his legs. He was a well-developed, prepossessing youth of sixteen years. He had stayed from school to join the cowboys in the great fall round-up of beef cattle, and participate in the

exciting work of cutting out his uncle's cattle from the general herd and driving them to sale.

Clark was a Wisconsin boy, who had been brought among the Indians by a strange turn in the wheel of fortune.

His eccentric uncle, Seth McKeag, had drifted to the reservation many years before, and had married Mother Swift Bird's sister. He had been a man of education, and in some degree he still retained his love of knowledge, being known among the Indians as the man with many books. He had grown wealthy in the cattle business, and had built a good-sized ranch house, which was looked upon with wonder by his Indian neighbors.

Three years previously McKeag had heard a rumor that his brother, who had been a poor inventor with unlimited hope, had died and left a young son motherless and homeless. Thereupon McKeag had gone back to Wisconsin to investigate, and having found the rumor to be true, had brought the boy to the Dakota plains. By permission from the Indian agent, he had placed Clark in the government school, where he had shared to some extent the fare and discipline of the Indian boys.

From the tangle of one Indian sister being Clark's aunt, and the other Lilian's foster mother,

the boy and girl were looked upon as cousins, and in many ways they were congenial comrades.

The bunch-grass party settled down a third time, for the boys had come to while away the Saturday afternoon in visiting the girls, and all were on their native heath when lounging on the grass.

"You fellows missed the fun," said Clark, when he was back upon the stile. "We scoured the country to the Rosebud and the Black Hills. We bunched five thousand cattle in one place, and all the owners had their beeves cut out; then we turned the cattle loose and bunched another lot. Every cowboy but one, in this part of South Dakota, seemed to be in the lasso gang."

"Who was that one?" Mario asked.

There was a little pause.

"Your brother, Alphonso."

"Why was not Alphonso there?" demanded Inez, quickly.

Clark hesitated somewhat longer.

"Other business, I suppose," he said evasively.

It must, indeed, have been important business that had kept Alphonso, the intrepid cowboy, from engaging in the great fall round-up of the beeves.

Inez gave a startled glance at Mario, but the handsome dark face of the Spanish-Indian boy expressed no wonder nor concern. He lay back lazily upon the grass, and clasped his hands be-

neath his head, and looked at Clark with half-closed eyes, as if awaiting further news of the events upon the range.

"The cowboys were divided into messes, and there was a chuck wagon, and a cook, and horse-wrangler for every mess — you know the way," proceeded Clark. "We fared first rate in our mess until the cook and the horse-wrangler had some trouble, and the cook got hurt, then I had to superintend the chuck for several days. Uncle Seth was sharp enough to turn me to account that way."

"I hope you made good biscuit and didn't burn the meat," said Lilian.

She remembered certain adverse rumors as to Clark's ability as a cook, which had floated in from the other school.

Clark shrugged his shoulders but did not commit himself.

"Did you shoot a deer?" she asked, seeing that a rolled-up skin was strapped before the saddle on his pony, which the Indian had fastened to a post.

"Yes," said he, "out near the Black Hills. You girls can dress and tan the skin, and divide it for your beadwork."

"I don't do nice beadwork," Lilian said, "but I will help the others dress the skin. It will be lovely for their work."

There was a murmur of delight from all the girls but Inez, who had lapsed into a dreary mood. The beautiful soft deerskin which their mothers had in such abundance in their girlhood, for all sorts of fancy work, and even for whole dresses, had become an almost unknown article, owing to the scarcity of deer. The girls were forced to be content with meager portions of the skins from small wild creatures and domestic animals, which they helped their mothers dress and scrape till they were thin and pliable.

"We thank you very much," said Katy. "We will bead some hat bands for the boys, and hang them on the Christmas tree."

And Clark was the hero of the day.

"It is not as it used to be," repeated Mario, opening his eyes to fix them jealously on the skin. "It used to be that Indian boys went hunting, and white boys stayed in school."

"Yes," said Clark, "times are changing every which way. Funny for a white boy to be brought to school by Indian policemen," and he leaned back on the stile and laughed. "I had an argument with Uncle Seth about not coming back this year, and he spoke to the policemen."

"You are needed," Mario said maliciously. "There is much hair to be cut. The points have long been growing."

Clark straightened up and groaned.

In an ill-starred moment he had made it known that he possessed a natural genius for the art of trimming hair, and thus he had become, perforce, the barber of the school.

"Ho-ke-la will come first," said Mario, and he rolled his eyes in the direction of a new full Indian boy sitting separate from the rest. He had taken no part in the conversation, as he could not speak English, and the pupils of the schools were not allowed to speak Dakota save on Sunday. Most of them observed the rule with care, although they loved to speak their native language.

The wild boy, Ho-ke-la, was the namesake of the man in the moon, because he was short and had a large body and large legs. He was enrolled as Stephen, but the civilized name had not begun to cling to him as yet. He had put on the garments of the schoolboy, but his long, wild tresses, reaching to his shoulders and besmeared with beaver oil, had not been tampered with.

"I'll shear him closer than a monk," Clark threatened recklessly.

"He will fight you when he catches you alone," said Mario.

"Not till he's laid off his mourning. 'Twouldn't be the custom."

"Will he mourn, I wonder — and his family —

and give away their things and ponies?" Katy said.

The rite of cutting hair was something very serious with the uncivilized Sioux. It was a sign of mourning, and was frequently attended with disastrous results. If the family went into mourning, they must scatter their possessions here and there as presents to their friends.

Hence the superintendents of the schools dreaded the enrolment of a long-haired boy, and postponed the evil day of shearing him till he was somewhat wonted to his new surroundings. Now and then the wild boy shed his locks from choice, to follow the example of the civilized boys.

"I don't know why the Indians are so strange," said Lilian, looking at the boy, who sat apart, in passive ignorance of what was going on. "Sometimes it seems all new and far away, as if I'd only read about it in a book."

Her eyes grew dreamy, and she gazed at the expanse of sky and herdland in a puzzled way. The mystery of how she came to be among the strange red people weighed upon her more and more as she grew older.

Girls of partial Indian lineage as fair as she were sometimes to be seen, but Lilian had no traits in common with her mates. Although she had a warm affection for these bright, weird children of

the plains with whom she had been reared, she was distinct from them in feeling, and her ways were wholly different from theirs.

"We do not want to be so strange," said Inez, gloomily. "We hate it and we are ashamed of it, but we are just as God made us and we cannot help it."

"We can help it a little, but not very much," said Katy. "We can wear alike dresses with white girls, and we can learn to work as well as they do, but Miss Hartford says we do not learn to think, so we cannot study very hard. And Mr. Averill says that we can never be all civilized if we believe in ghosts. And we always shall believe in ghosts."

"That reminds me!" Clark exclaimed, springing from the stile to plunge into his saddle-bag, and bring to light a little buckskin bag of ancient aspect, which he held up by a horsehair cord. "I've brought you a ghost-lock, Lilian."

All the bunch-grass party, but Ho-ke-la, started to their feet in vague alarm.

"The great-grandmother's," whispered Hester.

She had lived a neighbor to the Swift Bird's, and was versed in the tradition of the family ghost-lock.

"Wa-na-gi" (ghost-lock), Mario muttered, looking down at Ho-ke-la.

The wild boy also started up, as terrified as his companions. He gazed upon the gruesome relic dangling from Clark's hand, then turned and walked away. Baptiste followed him, then Mario and the rest.

The girls were likewise moved to slip away, and in a wondrously short time the group about the stile had melted into space.

Clark and Lilian left alone, exchanged a rueful glance and laughed.

CHAPTER III.

GREAT-GRANDMOTHER'S GHOST-LOCK.

LILIAN took the buckskin bag which held the lock of hair supposed to be the ghost or shade of the departed great-grandmother, and examined it with curiosity.

It was worked with porcupine quills in many lines, and blue and red figures had been traced upon it with indelible dye. It had an odor of sweet-smelling herbs, which had been placed as charmed necessities in the bag.

"Mother Swift Bird never let me see it, but she told me she had it. It was in a deerskin pack, and the pack was hanging in a corner of the cabin with a leather curtain worked with funny things in front of it. Great-grandmother's spoon and bowl and drinking cup were on the floor right under it. And Mother Swift Bird used to put food in the bowl, and water in the cup, for she thought the ghost would need them just the same as if it was great-grandmother herself."

"Aunt Losa did the same. She was always cooking extra tidbits for the ghost," laughed

Clark. "They thought it ate the ghost of the food, and left the real stuff for the dogs."

"Mother Swift Bird was afraid Aunt Losa couldn't keep it on account of Uncle Seth, and she made me promise I would keep it very safely, if Aunt Losa ever gave it to me, till 'twas time to bury it. I suppose Aunt Losa had to give it up."

"Yes; she got to cutting up too much about it. Every time she saw a white horse or a white cow, in the evening, she thought it was the great-grandmother's ghost, and she would fire off a gun and make a desperate stir. One night she saw a white cowskin hanging on a post, and banged away at it to scare it off. Uncle Seth was right behind the post, and escaped death by the skin of his teeth. He broke into the pack and pulled the ghost bag out, declaring he would burn it, but she begged him not to, and agreed to shift it onto you. She thought 'twould keep the old lady on the ghost trot to the crack of doom, if he should burn the ghost-lock."

"She believes it must be buried in great-grandmother's grave, or the ghost will not stop walking. Only think, it has been kept eleven years and nearly six months. I have kept account because I was so anxious for the burial time to hurry up. I felt sorry for Aunt Losa, Uncle Seth was so opposed to the ghost-lock, and I was afraid 'twould come to

me at last. And all because Mother Swift Bird's mother dreamed the night before great-grandmother died that she must be a ghost twelve years."

"The twelve years will be up next April — planting time — and Uncle Fair Weather will be on from the agency to attend the ceremony. You and I will be in the procession."

"'Twill be buried up there," said Lilian, looking at the ancient Indian graveyard on the hilltop just above the mission grounds.

A troop of little girls were wandering among the graves, searching for the beads profusely scattered there, — as offerings to the dead, it was supposed. They could not string the beads, for they were clogged with hard earth, but they treasured them. Strange to say, the children had no dread of being in the graveyard, though they thought it argued ill to step across a grave.

"I wish you hadn't shown it to the girls," was Lilian's regret. "I could have hidden it in my trunk, and they would not have known I had it."

"It was fun to scare them. Won't they make things lively if they see the ghost as often as Aunt Losa did? I'd like — Jerusha — wouldn't it be a junket?" Clark stopped suddenly and held his sides to laugh.

Lilian looked at him inquiringly, but gained no

reason for his jumbled exclamation and excessive mirth.

"Dear me! it's dreadful when there is a ghost-walk scare in the school," she said. "The little girls are cross and hard to manage, and the large and middle-sized girls break the rules, and stop to whisper when they should be hurrying about the meals. They had a frightful scare the last time the 'Best Friend' was here. There was to be a frost that night, and Mrs. Averill had covered her geraniums in the side yard with a sheet. Sarah Spider went to fill the water pitcher after dark for supper, and she saw the sheet and thought it was a ghost. Sarah and Amelia High Hawk waited on the teacher's table, and she told Amelia in the pantry. Of course that made Amelia nervous, and she upset the sauce dish, and the peach juice ran down on Mr. Averill's coat."

Clark held his sides once more.

"When will the 'Best Friend' be around again?" he musingly inquired.

"It's time for him next week, but I hope he will be late this year. I love our dear 'Best Friend,' and can hardly wait for him to come at other times; but Miss Delaney, the industrial teacher, went away last week to see her mother, who is very ill, and Mrs. Averill lets me oversee the kitchen when she can't be there. I make the teacher's

cake and puddings, but I wouldn't like to have the missionary eat them.

"I suppose I'll have to take my turn again at housework," grumbled Clark. "I wouldn't mind the outdoor work, but I detest this puttering round the kitchen in a woman's apron."

"Well, at any rate, the influence will be better than among the cowboys."

"Yes; it's innocent amusement, — making pies and stirring mush for Indians. Kind of queer, though, for a white boy; but no queerer than the other freaks of Uncle Seth's. He'll be around to bring my trunk and caution Mr. Greely in regard to tightening the discipline. If it hadn't been for you it would have taken more than two policemen to escort me back. I thought you would be worrying."

"So I was; I'm glad you're safe at school again. Now you must steady down and set a good example to the Indian boys," was Lilian's counsel. "Mr. Greely and the agent thought 'twould be a splendid thing to have a white boy's influence in the Indian school, but I'm afraid they're disappointed — just a bit."

Clark made no answer, though he seemed to be immersed in semi-serious reflection for a little.

Lilian knew that he was much too fond of the exciting life among the cowboys, and she borrowed

no anxiety about the discipline of the school. Despite the rigorous request of the eccentric uncle, Clark was granted many favors which the Indian boys could not have used. As he was more advanced than they in all his studies, he was given private lessons by the teachers, and he was to all intents a member of the superintendent's family.

"It's a bad thing for Alphonso," he changed the subject to remark; "they suspect he has been stealing cattle, and he couldn't take part in the round-up on account of his unpopularity. He ran the cattle off the range and delivered them to white thieves, who attended to the shipping — so it is supposed."

"But Alphonso couldn't do that by himself," said Lilian in surprise. "Why, he is only nineteen — just a schoolboy till last year."

"A fellow of nineteen can do a heap of mischief by himself, especially if he's half Indian and half Spanish. Though they think Alphonso had some partners on the range; but they haven't got upon the track of any one but him. The round-up proved that there has been a big steal. Uncle Seth has lost heavily. They're watching that Alphonso doesn't get away."

"What would they do if he should try? Take him to the agency and put him into jail?"

Clark shook his head. "Worse than that, most

likely. They are getting desperate about this cattle thieving, and old Pixley's working up the case. He's a squaw man, and a terror. Used to be a British sailor. He has lost a lot of cattle — so he claims."

"Oh, you don't imagine they would —" Lilian stopped and shuddered. She was used to sad reports of reckless deeds connected with the wild life of the plains, but she was horrified to think of young Alphonso in the hands of a remorseless mob of cattle drivers. "And he hasn't any father to defend him. Mr. Greely liked Alphonso, and he was a favorite with all the teachers. I don't believe he is a cattle thief; do you?"

Clark gave himself a little time, as if to weigh the matter from a juror's standpoint.

"Well, to tell the truth, I think old Pixley and his boys are pretty keen to lay the crime upon Alphonso. Pixley and Cardona were sworn enemies, and the Pixley boys are keeping up the feud with the Cardona boys."

"But the Pixleys wouldn't dare — they'd be found out, and then the agent would arrest and punish them!"

"Oh, the Pixleys would stand back and let the full-blood cowboys do the mischief. They would probably manage to escape the agent, though he's pretty strict. Those full-bloods are used to run-

ning risks, and they'd take their chance of getting caught."

"Inez must have known Alphonso was suspected, for she looked so worried when you spoke of him. Poor girl! she thinks the world of him."

"Such is life upon an Indian reservation," Clark descanted, jumping from the stile. "I didn't bring the ghost-pack nor the spoon and dishes — Uncle Seth gave orders that I shouldn't — and Aunt Losa is afraid the ghost will starve if you don't feed it."

"Well, I shan't," said Lilian firmly. "I didn't promise that. I shall put it in my trunk and that is all, if Mr. Averill will let me keep it, but I'm dreadfully ashamed to speak to him about it."

Clark explored the saddle-bag a second time, drawing out a narrow, beaded case.

"I brought the measuring sticks, and you must watch the new moons," was his caution.

They took the deerskin to the summer laundry in a little building in the yard and hung it on a line, then Clark resumed his journey to the boys' school, and Lilian went to seek an interview with Mr. Averill, and inform him of the great responsibility she had assumed in becoming the keeper of the ghost-lock.

The policemen had gone, and he was in his office. Lilian walked into the teachers' hall and

knocked upon the office door. Mr. Averill was opening the mail, but she was cordially admitted. She sat down rather shyly with the sacred relic in her lap.

"Perhaps you know that Cousin Clark is back," she said. "He brought me something very dreadful, and I've come to ask if I may keep it," holding up the bag.

"It doesn't look so very dreadful," Mr. Averill answered, reaching out to take it.

"Oh, it is — at least the girls think so. Of course I don't believe in it. It's great-grandmother's ghost-lock, and I am to keep it till the last of April."

Mr. Averill could not suppress a smile. He made an effort to untie the bag, but the horsehair cord refused to yield. It had been knotted hard for many years. He took his knife and was about to cut the cord when Lilian interposed.

"Please don't," she said. "It doesn't seem as if it would be right. I think I can untie it."

"Never mind," for he was not extremely curious to explore the contents. "I suppose there are the usual herbs and other charms. Will the burial time arrive in April?"

"Yes; the twelve years will be out. The bundle of notched sticks is in here"; she displayed the beaded case. "I am to cut a notch for every

month. Mother Swift Bird told me I must watch for the new moon, and I suppose I must, just as if I hadn't learned the calendar. No one else can keep it. Uncle Seth was going to burn it, so Aunt Losa sent it here."

Mr. Averill looked very grave, and gave the strange affair a moment's thought.

"I don't quite like to have you entering into such a custom, Lilian. We depend on you to lead the girls. I suppose they know you have the lock."

"Yes, they ran away from it. Of course it ought not to be here, but I promised Mother Swift Bird I would keep it very safely if it ever came to me."

"What nonsense, Lilian!" he suddenly exclaimed. "I am astonished that a girl like you should bind yourself with such a promise. Why, an ordinary Indian school-child of eight years ought to know far better. I wonder that you did not laugh at the absurdity."

He gave the bag a toss and looked at Lilian with stern eyes.

A wave of pained surprise swept over her and sent a vivid color to her sensitive face. In all the trials which befell the management of many Indian girls she had never seen the superintendent lose a vestige of his wondrous patience till that moment,

and she had no memory of ever having been reproved by him before.

"She had been good to me — Mother Swift Bird — and I loved her, and she was about to die. I should have been so cruel to have laughed at her," she faltered, choking back the tears.

"Pardon me, my child," said Mr. Averill, recovering himself and speaking gently. "I know it was a most important matter to the Indian woman that the hair be kept in safety and disposed of in the customary way, and we will respect her wish."

"Then you will let me keep it?" Lilian asked in deep relief.

"I must," was his reply. "Although I do not wonder that Clark's uncle wished to burn the troublesome lock, we mission workers cannot fight the superstition in that way. If we did we should offend the Indians, and our work would be in vain. But I fear the lock will make us trouble. Are you very sure that you have not a slight belief in the ghost yourself?"

"Oh, very sure indeed," she answered earnestly. "I wouldn't be at all afraid to sleep with the ghost-bag right under my pillow. I never believed in it when I was very small, though Mother Swift Bird used to tell me if I didn't go to sleep real soon at night the great-grandmother's ghost would

pull my mouth and eyes crooked, and draw a rose-bush across my face."

Despite the serious situation, Mr. Averill smiled.

"It is remarkable if you can take a firm stand against the superstition after that experience." He then suppressed a sigh. "That is one great difficulty with the Indian children. They are born to the belief, and they are frightened with these senseless ghost tales from their earliest understanding. Little wonder that it seems impossible to train it out of them. All are more or less affected by the superstitions."

"All of them — do you mean all?" she asked in quick suspense.

He paused, as if to search his memory for a case in the reverse.

"I have never known a girl or a boy in whom there was a trace of Indian lineage that I thought was free from it," was his reply.

Lilian started from her chair with vehement eyes and fluttering breath.

Did he think that she could not be free from the belief, or was he sure that she was not an Indian girl?

She tried to ask the question, but her lips refused to frame it, and she sank back tremblingly.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TATTOO ARTIST.

"THE great-grandmother would not be tattooed in the middle of the forehead or on her chin or arm, so she lost the long road that goes to the Many Lodges, and took the short one that goes another way," said Hester to the large and middle-sized girls who had met in council in the music-room behind closed doors. "The old woman that sits in the short road and watches every ghost that goes that way jumped up and made her stop, and looked to find the tattoo mark. She could not, so she pushed her from a cloud, and back she fell into this world. And the old woman in the short road told the grandmother in a dream that she must cut the wa-na-gi from the great-grandmother's head and keep it twelve grass-grows. And the great-grandmother now walks, an old, old ghost."

"I have not been tattooed," said Katy. "Would the old woman push me from a cloud?"

"I think you would not go that way. Those who have been to school can find the long road because they have walked in a different road down

here, my mother says. And all the short children will go the long road, too."

"That is good. I did not quite know before."

Katy was deficient in the ghost lore of her people, owing to her five years in the Eastern school.

"Hester is not true," disputed Sarah Spider. "She tries to be so civilized because her father is a policeman. Just like she wants to make folks think she is not full Indian. My mother says we all must be tattooed. I have been tattooed," pulling up her sleeve and thrusting out her slim brown arm to show a little spatter of blue dots above her wrist.

Sarah and some others had been gathering buffalo berries, or rabbits' noses, by the river, and had missed the bunch-grass party. They had been admitted to the council as the doors were being closed, and had not stopped to pass around the berries, but had dropped their baskets on the floor to join with zest in the discussion as to the wa-na-gi.

The ghost was not regarded with disfavor, although it was desirable to keep it at a distance. The great-grandmother had been a good woman and, according to tradition, her ghost was entitled to reverent attention. Strange to say, it was only the ghost of a well-behaved person that was restless and gave trouble.

Several of the girls displayed a similar mark

upon the arm, but the greater number had none, for the custom of tattooing, as well as of preserving ghost-locks, is upon the wane among the Teton of the present day.

"I do not much fear the old woman on the short road — and I am very healthy" — wavered Hester; "but I would be tattooed if Mr. Averill would let me."

"But he will not," said Katy. "He says it is a relic of barberry-ism, and it is very much against the rule."

"I would not care if it was," defied Sarah, in a cautious undertone. "A wild steer may hook you, or the boat may tip you out, or you may have the fast consumption, like Delia Eagle Man. I should be very scared if I was not tattooed," with the air of one long since prepared for death.

There was a consultation, while a resolute expression grew upon the faces of the girls.

"Not yet have the lamps been trimmed," for Jessie Two Moons hates her work," said Sarah. "They are on the laundry shelf, and I can pinch the black stuff from the wicks, and mix it with some hair oil from my trunk to make the tattoo medicine. And on the dormitory bureau there are needles in the cushion. We can go to the log house and sit against the door, and it will be short work to tattoo all of you."

There was silence, while the untattooed contended with their conscience whether to defy the superintendent's wish and enter into Sarah's barbarous plan. Before this question was decided Hester brought another before the halting council.

"Some one should go for cedar, for a wah-kon. Ghosts despise the smell of that, and if we hang it up above the dormitory door the wa-na-gi will stay out when we are asleep at night. And if we have the wah-kon in our pockets, she will not chase us when we go to take in clothes or empty dish-water after dark. If it is under our pillow we shall not dream of the ghost — I think — but I am not quite sure. If you dream of it, you must not speak to it or shake hands with it. If you do, you will die before the grass grows next," was the startling revelation.

"I shall stay awake all night and go to sleep in school," Katy tremblingly resolved.

"Four of those who have been tattooed may go for the wah-kon," permitted Sarah, who was fast assuming full control of the anti-ghost preparations. Sarah was a chief's daughter, and she had the in-born majesty that forced obedience from her mates.

"But that would be against another rule," warned Katy. "The cedar is across the river, and Mr. Averill does not allow the girls to go alone on the water."

"Inez has been tattooed, and she can steer the boat above the swift water. And Louise and Nancy and Amelia have been tattooed, and they are good rowers. They can row the boat above the bend, and Mr. Averill will not see them," plotted Sarah. "It is early, and before dark they can get back."

"You must not ask Inez; she is sad," said Katy softly. Inez had been brooding at the outskirts of the circle, taking no part in the talk. To have strong cause for being sad was regarded by these Indians girls as a distinction rather to be craved. According to their code of etiquette, they asked no questions, but consigned the mourner to an honored station in their ranks, and kept aloof from her in sympathetic silence.

"She need not act glad — only steer the boat. Will she go? Of course she will," persisted Sarah, respectfully addressing Inez in the third person, looking to one side meanwhile.

"I am very sad indeed, but I will go," submitted Inez. "But I shall not talk or smile."

There was a dash of venturous excitement in the undertaking which she could not miss, even for the sake of dwelling on her brother's troubles. She had learned through Mario of the suspicions that were entertained against Alphonso, and had understood from Clark's remarks that he had been ruled out of joining in the round-up.

"If Mr. Averill finds out, he will be so sorry and so quiet, just like he had heard bad news from home," still scrupled Katy. "And to-night there is the social with the grand march and games, and the boys invited. If Mr. Averill does not punish us he will talk to us with his eyes and make us ashamed. And if he does punish us we shall be sad."

"We will punish ourselves," said Sarah. "We will turn our plates down and not eat till supper-time to-morrow, to show him we are sorry that we had to do our ghost duty. We can drink milk and coffee but not taste one bite."

"Tokee! And Mr. Averill's birthday, so there is a splendid dinner?" Nancy cried.

"And very lots of candy and a beeg red apple in our plates?" Jane added.

"I am very hungry now, and I shall star-rve in all that time," was Katy's tragic exclamation.

Sarah had exhausted all her arguments, and time was on the wing. She now resorted to derision and vainglory.

"Those who are not brave enough to fast can eat rabbits' noses and wild turnips. I am a Two Kettle Indian. My father and uncles have fasted for the sun dance. They hunted the mystery tree when they were very faint, but they were very brave. And all the people chose my mother's

cousin, Iron Crow, to pierce the children's ears because he did not eat till he was very lean. The Two Kettles are good fasters."

Katy was subdued by this illustrious record, and she said no more.

"Those who will turn down their plates three times hold up this side," Sarah raised her right hand.

Every hand went up, and Sarah bowed with dignified approval.

The council now adjourned to carry out the two wild plans, and Nancy pushed apart the sliding doors between the play-room and the music-room.

"Ee-ah!" she said, "here sits the twin listening at the crack. She tells tales, and she will report to Mr. Averill."

The twin responded with a charming smile, displaying small white teeth and dancing dimples in her cheeks and chin. She was the tiniest of the five-year-olds, a weird phenomenal red-brown baby who had not awakened to a sense of obligation, yet was alarmingly precocious. She had an Indian doll, arrayed in beaded finery and cradled in a wee red blanket, tied upon her back, and in her lap reposed a dainty pale-faced doll attired in white gauze, with a pink silk underfrock, and shoes and hose to match.

"I am leetle, but I can spik English. I have

learn to spik English in one year," she boasted, with a gleam of triumph in her sharp, black eyes. "I am so leetle when I came to school next year that the white mother rocked me to sleep bylo. I shall spik English all the time when I go home next time there be no school. And — and — I can tell tales and you cannot scold me, because I am the twin."

Twins are mystic beings to the Teton Indians, who believe they have been sent from Twinland as a special honor to this world. As they are of superhuman origin they are tenderly indulged, lest they become offended and die in order to return to Twinland. The twin sister had been snatched in infancy, but Alomina had been spared as sound material for the missionaries.

"Kee! she has the new doll Mrs. Averill gave me from my mission box last week," said Inez, breaking her resolve to mourn in silence on beholding Alomina's plunder. "I left it on the top shelf of my cupboard."

There was a row of narrow cupboards round the play-room, and the girls had separate nooks in which to keep their treasures and a portion of their clothes. The large girls, even those of sixteen years, received dolls in their mission boxes and they cherished them as fondly as the little girls.

"I climb up on a chair and pull Morning-glory's

hair, and make her fall down. I can play with her because you are my cousin and I am your girl and I am the twin," was Alomina's calm reply.

"She will spoil Morning-glory very fast," said Inez in dismay. "Just like I ought to take her," and she made a hesitating reach toward the doll.

Alomina crushed the waxen beauty in her arms, impaling Inez with a firm dart from her beady eyes.

"If you take Morning-glory, I shall cut a beeg ha-ole in my alboos and you will have to sew them because I am your girl. And you cannot scold me because I am the twin."

Inez stepped back in despair.

"She would cut clear through her apron and her dress and combination sleeves, and there would be six elbow patches, and I could not do them well. Mrs. Averill would think my girl was mended worst of all the little girls, and I should be ashamed. Of course the twin could not be punished," was her indiscreet acceptance of the trying situation.

Every large and middle-sized girl had a little girl to care for, and as far as possible the children were distributed according to their sisterhood and cousinhood among the older pupils. Thus to Inez fell the privilege of caring for the twin, and she per-

formed her duty with the latent thought that she was scrubbing supernatural flesh when washing Alomina's face and hands, and coaxing sacred locks into the wiry little braids which she adorned with gingham bows in place of ribbon. Alomina's hair strings disappeared so speedily that the extravagance of ribbon bows was not indulged in save on state occasions.

As there seemed to be no other way, the twin was left in full possession of the doll in the deserted play-room.

"I think she did not hear us through the crack, and so she cannot tell a tale this time," said Sarah, as the girls were hurrying through the hall.

Inez and her three companions started for the boat, which lay below the steep bluff sloping from the mission grounds upon the east, across a little stretch of sandy beach.

The tattoo artist mixed her medicine with all the speed and stealth becoming her oracular profession, while the candidates for the mysterious rite which would ensure a safe journey to the Many Lodges sauntered to the secret meeting-place by twos and threes.

The log house was a favorite resort in which the girls had leave to romp at pleasure, and they knew it would awaken no suspicion if they were seen to gather there in force. The building stood upon

the edge of a ravine some rods beyond the stile, and was a camping-place in winter for the Indian friends who visited the school.

When Alomina found herself alone, she placidly undressed the pale-faced doll and laid her dainty garments on the floor. She then arose and pushed a chair against the sink, in which there was a row of stationary wash-bowls and a pail of water at one end.

She grasped the naked doll beneath one arm, and climbed into the chair and dipped a liberal supply of water from the pail into the bowl. She found a cake of soap close by, and seized upon a wash-rag hanging near.

"Inez give me a bath thees day. I shall give Morning-glory a bath," she chattered to herself, and plunged the doll into the water to its chin.

"Inez rub very lots of soap on me. I shall rub very lots of soap on Morning-glory."

The pink and white complexion disappeared beneath a coat of lather, vigorously rubbed upon the doll from top to toe, then washed away with startling effect.

"Inez pour water on my head. I shall pour water on Morning-glory's head."

The fluffy golden head was deluged with a dipperful of water.

When the bath had been completed to the satis-

faction of the twin, she wiped the doll upon the roller towel and alighted from the chair.

"She loo-k very pale. Just like she is seek," viewing with concern the haggard features of the washed-out doll. "I shall rock her to sleep, bylo."

She dropped upon the floor and hugged the pitiable image in her apron, swaying back and forth, and crooning in the soothing manner of an Indian mother singing to her child, "A-wo, a-wo, a-wo."

Presently she peeped into her apron, viewed the doll, and pulled the wire to close its eyes.

"Now she is asleep," she whispered, rising from the floor and walking on tiptoe to her cupboard, which she opened softly.

She laid the doll upon a low shelf, smothered it beneath her Sunday petticoat, and shut the door by stealthy inches. Then she smiled and skipped across the room.

"Now I shall wash the white dress, and the pink dress, and the other clothes. And I shall hang them on the wood-box. Then I shall go and tell Meester Averill."

CHAPTER V.

LILIAN'S JOY.

MR. AVERILL noticed Lilian's manner as she sank back in the chair in agitated silence, and he felt the sympathy which he might not express.

He was not unmindful of the dreamy mood in which the young girl frequently indulged, and he surmised that she was musing on the strangeness of her history, and wondering if the mystery of her past would ever be explained. But the day dreams must not be encouraged, lest they take possession of her life.

"Lilian," he observed, when he had given her a little time in which to calm herself, "will you not try to live more in the present, and let the past be as a closed book which you must not seek to read? You may be sure that if God wishes you to read it He will open it to you according to His own wise purpose."

"I will try," she said obediently; "but if I only knew one thing —" again her courage failed.

"I understand," was his reply, "and I will answer you in this way: If the small white rose

which Mrs. Averill has cared for through the summer should by some strange fortune be transplanted to a wild spot with the sand-flowers, do you think it would be hard to know it from a sand-flower? It might droop and die for want of care, or be a very puny and imperfect little flower, but if it bloomed at all it would be a white rose. The sand-flowers have their part in nature, and are blooming where the wise Creator planted them, but the white rose does not belong with them, and one could never be mistaken for the other."

Lilian drew a long, deep breath of perfect joy, and Mr. Averill saw that she had grasped his meaning. From that moment she was on a new plane, and she could resist the day dreams more courageously.

"Miss Hartford tells me you are making good progress in your studies, and thinks that you could do a little more, for all you spend so much time in the kitchen," he remarked. "Would you like to take a short German lesson in the afternoon with me?"

Like Clark, Lilian had advanced beyond the simple studies of the school, and was taking private lessons in a high school course.

"I should be so happy," she replied, with lustrous eyes. "If I am really and truly a white girl, I shall need to know so much of everything. Now I shall learn the whole of the beautiful 'Skylark' in

the English classic you asked me to read, instead of the one sad verse I almost cried over yesterday when I sat alone on the bluff."

"What is the one sad verse?" he asked.

She gave it rather timidly, but understandingly, and with expression: —

"We look before and after,
And pine for what is not;
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought."

"That is a plaintive little stanza," he responded, with a cheerful smile. "But Shelley is not always gloomy. This description of the skylark's flight and song at sunset would be more safe for you to dwell upon: —

"In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are brightening,
Thou dost float and run;
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun."

There came a light tap at the door, and Mrs. Averill entered, leading Alomina.

"I met this child upon the stairs just now, and she seems to have a strange little tale to tell. I don't quite understand her," she puzzled as she closed the door.

Mr. Averill viewed the twin with serious attention as she placed herself in confidential nearness to his knee, standing firmly in her tiny but substantial government shoes. She had taken off her dripping apron, but her linsey-woolsey frock was soaked with suds and dragging weightily about her feet. Indeed, no part of her was dry except the Indian doll accoutered to her back.

"I doubt if she should be allowed to tell tales," he observed; "the habit seems to grow upon her."

"We will try to teach her better when she is a little older," Mrs. Averill replied. "This may be something which we really ought to know."

The twin perceived that she might speak, and patted Mr. Averill's knee in meditative silence while she strove to set in order her report.

"The wa-na-gi is here," she presently began; "and Inez and Louise and Nancy and Amelia go across the reever in the boat to get some cedar for a wah-kon. For the ghost do not like cedar."

Mr. Averill stopped to hear no more. He hastily explained to Mrs. Averill about the lock, then crossed the room, and looked upon the river from the window. The girls had not gone far enough around the bend, and he could see the boat some way across.

The river at this point was swift and treacherous,

for there was a divided current flowing round a sand-bar.

"They are daring," he observed in strenuous quietude. "If they should row into the whirl between the two currents they would have hard work. I will try to call them back."

He stepped into the other hall and pulled the bell-rope, and the bell sent out a quick, decisive summons from the little tower.

The small girls in the graveyard ceased their search for beads and scampered down hill, and the tiny teepes by the wood-pile were deserted, while the little campers started for the house. The school had been well trained to promptly obey the bell, wherever it was heard.

But the girls upon the river, after resting on their oars a minute, pushed on for the other shore.

Mr. Averill came back and kept close watch of them with Mrs. Averill and Lilian.

"There is no other boat except the leaky one, and I have no way to follow them," he said.

"Inez understands a boat as well as any of the boys, and the other girls are strong and fearless," Mrs. Averill assured him.

But she shared his tense anxiety until the boat had touched the sands upon the other side. The girls secured it and scud into a gorge among the bleak hills where the cedar grew.

"They will probably return as safely as they went," he trusted, giving Lilian, whom he saw in mute distress, a kindly look.

Alomina pulled his sleeve. Her tale was only half told and she wished to finish it.

"Some other girls are at the log house, and Sarah Spider is tattooing them, for the old woman in the short road will poosh them from a cloud if they be not tattooed."

"Oh, how soon the trouble has begun!" cried Lilian. "It is all because I have the lock. If you had taken it from me — and — I couldn't have helped myself — and put it in the stove, perhaps it wouldn't have been a broken promise and the girls might have been quieted. It isn't that they really want to disobey. They are dear, good girls, you know."

"You may put it in your trunk," was Mr. Averill's answer as he turned to leave the office.

She took the lock into the long, dim attic where her trunk was kept among some packing boxes and disabled furniture. The trunks belonging to the Indian girls were in the lavatory and the closets which adjoined the dormitories; hence the girls would have no need of venturing into the attic, which would be a mystic place to them when they discovered that the lock was there. She put the bag into an empty box inside her trunk and went

below, to find the small girls in a hungry line outside the kitchen waiting for the bread which she distributed at four o'clock. The twin stood first. She drew the child into the kitchen, giving her a generous crust.

"I must change your clothes," when she had fed the other children and dispersed them. "You've been playing in the water, and I am afraid you have been very naughty."

"Of course I do not mind Inez. And I make Morning-glory seek. But of course I shall mind you," Alomina answered sweetly.

Lilian had a way of managing the sacred twin which caused the Indian girls much wonder and alarm. She did not have their firm opinion that the midget was of superhuman origin, and she dealt with her according to the rules which govern natural flesh and blood.

In the log house the tattoo work was going bravely on. The girls were seated on the floor, Katy, Jane, and Hester wedged against the door to guard against intrusion. Sarah had selected three girls who had been tattooed as her assistants. The task of pricking in the medicine was slow and irritating. The needles drew blood, but the candidates endured it with savage stoicism, for the most part, though a civilized squeal was heard by snatches when the needle probed too deep.



KATY, JANE, AND HESTER WEDGED AGAINST THE DOOR TO GUARD AGAINST INTRUSION.

"I shall have seex very beeg spots in the meedle of my forehead," fanatically declared Jane when her time drew near. She viewed with scorn the few dots on the arms which Sarah and her helpers had thus far accomplished in the way of sacred decoration. The large girls were assigned three moderate dots, and the middle-sized girls two of rather less importance.

"Kee!" objected Sarah. "Mr. Averill would see them, and you would always look like a wild Indian. And you may go East and get very civilized, like Katy," with some irony. "You are a middle-sized girl, and you can only have two middle-sized dots. The old woman in the short road has sharp eyes, and does not care about a big tattoo."

"I do not know if I am a meedle-size," queried Jane, who was a twelve-year-old full Indian girl, much overgrown. "When I go with the meedle-size the long girls will say, 'You are a long girl. You should go with us.' And when I go with the long girls the meedle-size will say, 'You are a young girl. You should go with us.' And so I do not know what kind I am. Meeses Averill say I can choose what kind, and she will tell the girls."

"I would be a middle-size," advised Katy. "Then if you do wrong and Mrs. Averill thinks

of sending you to bed when it is daytime, Mr. Averill will say, 'I would not punish Jane this time, my dear. She is a middle-sized girl and she does not know much better.'"

"Then I shall be a meedle-size," decided Jane. "But I would like the long girl's arms and naik to my new dress," relinquishing with regret the more elaborate sleeves and collar of the older girls.

"I shall only have one very little dot away up on my arm," said Katy, who was putting off the operation with a deal of dread. She had a guilty feeling that the one small dot would be a glaring mark of barbarism that could never be effaced.

"I, too," said Hester; "and I do not know if my mother would like that. She has been converted, and she wants to walk in the new road with her children."

"Meester Averill say we all must have a conscience," Jane remembered. "Katy and Hester have a very stylish conscience."

Jane had lately been promoted in sewing from the patchwork class into the dressmaking ranks, and was wrestling with stylish costumes for her little sister and herself. Everything remarkable was now discussed by her as stylish.

"You should not talk about a conscience as if it was a sleeves and neck," corrected Katy. "And you must say, 'Mister Averill says,' not 'Meester

Averill say.' You do not speak good English. You have much to learn, but you are very young, and there is time enough."

Just then the bell rang and there was a sudden scrambling to the feet.

"It does not mean us," Sarah said. "Mr. Averill must have found that the girls have gone for the wah-kon, and rings for them."

"But all must run when they hear the bell," said Katy.

"You must not go till you have been tattooed," commanded Sarah, seizing Katy's arm to pull her back. "I will do you now. The girls that we have tattooed may be excused," with majesty.

But the sacred mischief was so fascinating that the tattooed girls were forced to linger in defiance of the bell.

Katy yielded to the sway of the imperious Sarah and received the mark, Hester following her example. As they were pulling down their sleeves a well-known step was heard without. Then came a knock upon the door which could not be mistaken.

CHAPTER VI.

CLARK'S DISCLOSURE.

EVERY girl was on her feet and every sleeve in place when Mr. Averill was admitted, but the conscious faces of the girls and the little pool of medicine, which Sarah had upset upon the floor in springing up, convinced him that the twin's report had been correct. He stood upon the threshhold, looking at the girls in silence, while, as Katy had foretold, his strong, gray eyes spoke volumes.

"They are very little dots — and they are hidden by our sleeves," she faltered, moved to quick confession.

"Are they so very small that they are hidden from your hearts, my girls?" he seriously inquired, with a glance that swept the group.

There was a breathless hush, while every head was dropped as if in self-reproach, then all but Katy gave a whirl, in startling unison, and turned their backs. She faced the difficulty, with her dark eyes fixed contritely on the toes of Mr. Averill's shoes.

"But we were afraid of the old woman in the

short road, for the Bible says, 'In the midst of life we are in death,'" she argued timidly.

Doubtless it was well for Mr. Averill's influence that his pupils did not see the flicker of a smile that crept into his eyes at this upholding of the pagan faith by a passage from the Christian Bible.

The mission girls were well instructed in the Psalms and the New Testament, and many of them had a store of Bible verses which they frequently rehearsed in reverent tones to one another.

The flicker of a smile was banished instantly, and Mr. Averill earnestly remarked: —

"Lilian has a lock of hair to keep until next spring. She has put it in her trunk, and you need not have the slightest fear of it. It is simply a lock of the great-grandmother's hair, and not her ghost. I wish you would believe me, girls, when I assure you that the spirits of those who have died cannot come back, and there has never been a ghost, and never will be while the sun shines, and the grass grows, and the snow falls, and there are plains, and hills, and rivers."

"Tokee!" responded his averted audience in a dissenting whisper.

He said no more, but quietly dismissed the girls and hastened to the bluff to watch for the returning boat.

The cedar gatherers came back in safety, with

suspicious bundles in their shawls upon their backs. They avoided Mr. Averill and placed them in their cupboards, and before dark every pupil, to the tots of five years, had a cedar twig somewhere about her, as a charm, or wah-kon.

"I suppose, if I were in due haste to solve the Indian problem, I should make a little bonfire of the wah-kon, and discipline the girls who went for it, together with the tattoo party," Mr. Averill said to Mrs. Averill as she came upstairs from helping Lilian oversee the work of getting supper; "but cedar seems to be considered a necessary charm among the Teton Indians. They burn it in electric storms to keep the thunder bird from flapping its wings too hard, and it is used in many sacred rites, probably because the red cedar is supposed to have been the first tree discovered by the gods. Indeed, the Sioux would think their welfare in jeopardy if they were not abundantly supplied with charms of cedar, wild sage, and white feathers. We must make haste slowly with these Indian children," was his charitable opinion.

"After all," said Mrs. Averill, "a sprig of cedar in the pocket or beneath the pillow of an Indian girl is quite in keeping with the horse-chestnut which a staid New England church-woman of my acquaintance slyly carries in her pocket as a guard against rheumatism."

"And I happen to know that my instructor in Greek at college prefers not to walk under a ladder. If, by accident, he does, I fancy he is tempted to sit down to turn his luck before proceeding on his way," was Mr. Averill's further plea for his benighted Indian girls.

"And you remember Cousin Marian, who is a graduate of Vassar, urged us not to start upon our wedding journey to the reservation camp school four years ago yesterday, because it was Friday."

"Perhaps she feared that we would travel on Sunday," was his kind excuse.

"No; she knew we were to visit Aunt Lovina, in Chicago, over Sunday. But the worst has not been told. I allowed Dolphus to plant the potatoes in the dark of the moon last spring — while you were at the agency." There was a penitent expression on the young matron's girlish face. "He was anxious that our first mission crop should be a grand success — and it was!"

"There was more rain than usual on the plains this year," smiled Mr. Averill. "I fear I shall need to discipline you, by taking care to oversee the planting of the next potato crop myself. But the question is decided. Since an educated portion of the white race is inclined to dabble in the black art, there must be exceptions to the rule of discipline as it relates to Indian children. Our

superstitious girls shall not be sent to bed supperless to-night, as I premeditated, and the social may be held while we await results."

But less than two hours later, Clark rode up, and peered into the windows of the play-room and the music-room to find no merry girls in company array. Lilian met him at the door as he dismounted.

"I heard there was to be a frolic over here this evening, and I've come in cowboy finery," he said. "I couldn't bring my dress suit on the forced march, and I didn't want to miss the fun."

"You'll miss it, anyhow," regretted she. "The large and middle-sized girls went to bed without a bite of supper, when the kitchen work was finished, of their own accord. They'd broken two rules, — going after cedar, and tattooing twelve girls, because of the wa-na-gi,— and they thought they needed punishing."

Clark whistled in surprise.

"Isn't it a queer state of conscience for a lot of Indian girls to think they need punishing?" he asked.

"No; our girls are all that way. Even Sarah Spider, who persuades the girls to do so many things they shouldn't, has a very tender conscience," trusted Lilian. "And she can say so many psalms, word for word. Mr. Averill

doesn't know it, but the girls intend to fast until to-morrow night, and there's to be a splendid dinner in honor of his birthday. Inez made the squash pies, and you'd want to eat a whole one if you took one taste. And Hester's pot roast is to be delicious. Only think how hard 'twill be to have to smell it and not eat it."

"Ah! — excuse me, — but I mustn't think of it," exclaimed Clark, and he thumped his stomach with a hungry sigh.

"The girls had planned so much about the social, and they had the corn all popped. Mrs. Averill had given all of them a lovely new hair-ribbon and a hemstitched handkerchief, and they were to wear their pretty new dresses from the mission boxes. Katy has a blue dress, with the dearest little jacket and crushed collar, and Inez has a red dress, with a velvet yoke and cuffs. They would have looked too sweet for anything."

Clark sat down upon the step to ponder on the situation, while he held his pony by the bridle.

"Quite a party of the boys are on the way. They have a gun, with which to scare the ghost. They are all dressed up in shoe blacking, and the sweetest smelling hair-oil, and their hair is parted very straight. Mario has on his best coat, with the prettiest black-eyed Susans, which he means to give to Katy, in his buttonhole. He has a cherry

necktie sprigged with yellow, and he looks too cute to live. Their hopes will be like Katy's collar," copying Lilian's admiration and regret.

"Well, tie your pony and come in," she laughed. "Mrs. Averill is playing on the organ in the music-room, and we can visit in the play-room for a little while."

"Wait a bit. I'll meet the boys and send them back. 'Twill save them something of a walk and keep the girls from laughing at them from behind the curtains," and he vaulted to the saddle and rode off.

He soon returned and came into the play-room, where he hung his monstrous hat upon a hook, and took a seat with Lilian on a bench.

"I met them in the hollow by the dug-out, and, upon my word, I think they weren't so sorry, after all, to turn round on account of the wa-na-gi. They kept as close together as a flock of sheep. Mario was on his bronco, but he didn't ride ahead of the walkers.

"Isn't it too dreadful that I have to be the keeper? Mrs. Averill is distressed because the girls have acted so. Of course she could have made them dress and stay downstairs, but they wouldn't have smiled or talked the whole evening. And if she'd tried to have the grand march, they would have hung their heads and walked side-

ways and all out of step. They can be so graceful, or so very awkward, just as they are in the mood."

Lilian sighed, as if she shared the burden of the faculty in dealing with the wayward Teton maids.

"Upon the whole, I'm rather glad that you and I are white," Clark said complacently.

"Oh, do you know, I've never been quite sure that I was not an Indian until this very afternoon? Mr. Averill has convinced me, — and I am so proud and happy!"

"Bless me! have you had a doubt of that?" surprised at her short-sightedness. "I've known all along that you weren't a little Miss Lo."

"How could you be sure? Alma Parsons is an Indian, for all she has blue eyes, and light hair, and a freckled face as white as yours or mine."

"But Alma dotes on Indian hash and rosebud porridge, and I met her going to the agency this morning with a shawl on her head. Her dress was greasy, and the freckles didn't show for want of soap and water."

"Oh, dear! and she was here in school eight years, and only left last spring. She is but quarter Indian, and she learns as quickly as a white girl. She might have gone to Carlisle and been fitted to become a teacher or a field matron, and gone about the reservation doing sights of good."

Lilian stopped to think about the saddest feature of the Indian problem, — that so many bright, industrious pupils, after spending years in school, slip back into the sloth and gloom so natural to the Indian race. She remembered favorite pupils who had left school seemingly well fitted to exert a civilizing influence in the reservation home, but had returned from time to time on camping visits in a pitifully changed condition. That they had proved unequal to the task of grappling with the difficulties that beset them in the Indian hut was shown by the untidy clothes, the grimy skin, the tousled, drooping head, the silent tongue, the drear expression of the bright eyes so alert with interest in the happy school-days.

"But there's hope for Alma yet," Clark interrupted Lilian's mournful reverie to observe. "She was on the verge of marrying a long-haired Indian last Sunday, but she changed her mind and ran out of church when the Indian clergyman began the ceremony. Aunt Losa was invited to the wedding."

"I'm glad she changed her mind before it was too late," laughed Lilian. "Now, if she would only change it once more and go to Carlisle, and stay five years, she might come back all out of danger of backsliding."

"Perhaps her narrow escape from the long-haired Indian will be a warning that she'd better

continue her education," Clark observed. "See here — to change the subject: Aunt Losa has been growing confidential lately,— we were always on good terms, you know, — and she has told me something that may lead to a discovery. Have you ever wondered what became of the things you wore when you fell into the Swift Birds' hands?"

"Oh, so many times, when I was old enough to think about it, after I had come to school. But when I asked Mother Swift Bird where I came from, and what I wore, she would tell me that The Old Woman Who Never Dies sent me from the far North with the wild birds when they flew South for the winter, and I was dressed like a gray duck."

"Something soft and downy, of a gray color?" queried Clark.

"It must be that. She said she dressed me very quickly in her own child's clothes which she always carried with her while in mourning, and only Father Swift Bird and herself saw me as a duck. She told me if I talked about it, I would turn into a duck and fly back North with the birds in the spring. And when we heard the wild geese quacking in the air one time, she said they were scolding me because I wished to see my duck's dress; but I knew that wasn't possible."

"Probably she was so sly about the things

because she thought you might be claimed by some one and identified by them. She told Aunt Losa, when she knew she wouldn't live, that she had hidden them about the river bluffs, when camping here some years ago. She said it was within a gunshot of the mission, but Aunt Losa doesn't seem to know where. She claimed to have had a dream that told her to hide the things, and draw a chart to describe the place, and she gave the chart to Aunt Losa, telling her you were to have it when the plums had ripened nine times after you had come to school."

"Oh! I came to school nine years ago this fall — and the plums are ripe now — and almost gone. Did you bring the chart?" said Lilian eagerly.

"No. Aunt Losa showed it to me, but she must have thought, as she was forced to trust me with the ghost-lock, that was quite enough. She'll deliver it herself within a week or so. But I doubt if you can make much out of it. An Indian drawing isn't easy to interpret, and the hieroglyphics look like birds' tracks in the mud."

"But we can surely hunt and hunt until we find the things, if they are within a gunshot of the mission. O Clark! there may be something that will prove just who I am. What if there should be a little ring that has my real name on it? or a tiny bit of locket — with — my own, own mother's pic-

ture in it?" Lilian caught her breath and almost sobbed.

Clark was still a moment, struggling with his own emotions.

"I wish we could begin to search to-night," she said, with feverish anxiety.

"Too dark," was his objection. "And we'd better wait and get the chart. We must go slow and keep quiet, or 'twill be like Captain Kidd's treasure — everybody will be digging for it, and you may be robbed of it."

"What about Captain Kidd's treasure?" she inquired.

"Constellations! — have you never heard about the bloody pirate?" he exclaimed in great surprise. "That comes of being captured by the Indians in one's infancy. The lateness of the hour, and a peculiar weakness known as word failure, prevent my doing full justice to the great financier, but I'll try to give a brief synopsis of Kidd's business career."

"I'm not quite sure that I know the meaning of financier," said Lilian, looking puzzled.

"No? Well, a financier, as clearly as I can define it, is one who has a faculty for getting hold of what belongs to some one else. The woods are full of them in the Indian country, and you'd bump against one in the cities every time you

turned a corner. The city fellows wear silk hats and carry gold-headed canes, as a rule. They're apt to travel out this way in special cars. Kidd had a different way of dealing, but 'twas on the same principle."

Thereupon he skimmed through the story of the noted bandit of the seas, curdling her blood by his narration.

Clark's disclosure of the secret as to the disposal of the baby clothes was a marked event in Lilian's life. It had a most important bearing on her past and her future.

CHAPTER VII.

MYTHS.

WHEN Lilian went upstairs to bed, she found the lamp extinguished in the large and middle-sized girls' dormitory, and the occupants apparently asleep. The muslin curtains had been drawn and pinned together, but the glimmer of a new moon sifted through them and revealed the white beds and the outlines of the moveless forms beneath the bedclothes.

Lilian closed the door and stepped into the passage between the two long rows of beds, and was about to steal on tiptoe to her separate little compartment at the further end of the dormitory, when a score of white-gowned figures started up in bed and braced themselves against the headboards, with pillows at their backs.

"We thought it might be Mrs. Averill," said Sarah, who was near the door, with Nancy. "You need not tell us that the boys have not been here. We saw Clark come and go without them."

"They were on the way," said Lilian, "but Clark sent them back."

"Ee! we know that," Sarah answered wisely.

"They were dressed up very nice. Their shoes were blacked. Their hair was parted very straight. Mario had on a cherry necktie sprigged with yellow. He was bringing Katy a bouquet of black-eyed Susans."

Katy hid beneath the bed clothes in confusion, while the score of girls repeated Sarah's closing statement in a measured tone, as if they had rehearsed it for a concert recitation: —

"He — was — bringing — Katy — a — bouquet — of — black-eyed — Susans."

"We shoved the window up a crack and listened, like the twin," said Nancy. "That was not polite, but we are Indians, and we are different."

"We must be still or Mrs. Averill will come and say for us to go to sleep," warned Hester from the further end; "Amelia then can tell us no more Indian stories."

Amelia was distinguished as the myth-teller of the school. Her mind was stored with Indian folk-lore, which had been poured out to her from earliest childhood by her great-aunt, Ski-bi-bi-la, who was a medicine woman, and was thought to talk with trees and gain from them a knowledge of performing wondrous cures, detecting wrongdoers, and recovering lost or stolen property.

Amelia knew delightful tales of sky, and wind, and water people, and talking birds, and animals,

which Lilian loved to hear. As it was only half-past eight,— not quite the usual bedtime, — she sat down on the bed with Katy and Louise to listen.

"She has just told about the little wolves with the red necklaces, whose father sang a beautiful song, and made a fog come, so the man who had been kind to the cubs could steal his enemies' horses," Katy said to Lilian. "Now she is to tell a ghost story."

"Oh, she ought not," Lilian said; "it will frighten you, and Mr. Averill and Mrs. Averill wouldn't like it."

"Kee! there is no rule against it before bed-time," Sarah said; "we all want to be scared very lots."

"Two Faces and Four Ears will scare you very lots," announced the myth-teller.

"THE FOUR-EARED GIANT."

"Once there was a very big giant, named the Anung-ite," she began. "He had two faces, one before and one behind. He went along kicking the ground, and all the people heard him. When he kicked with one foot, bells would ring, and an owl would hoot. When he kicked with the other, just like a buffalo was snorting very mad. When, again, he stepped, a chickadee would sing, and next all kinds of animals would make a noise.

"So big were the Anung-ite's four ears that each one would hold three men. Everybody was afraid to go outdoors at night, for, if they met Two Faces, he would toss them into his ear and walk off with them, and never bring them back.

"There was a very bad boy, who would not mind his mother. So one night she said, 'I will put you out of the lodge and the Anung-ite will toss you into his ear.' She did not think the giant was around, and she only meant to scare the boy. But he kept on acting mean, and, very cross she got, and pushed him out of the lodge, and would not let him come back. He ran around the lodge crying, and then it was very still.

"Then his mother went to hunt for him, but she could not find him. And next day her husband helped her hunt, but no one had seen the boy. And they came back to their lodge and cried many days. One night, when the mother was crying, she heard some one say: —

"'Hin! hin! you said to me, — Ghost, take that one. Hin! hin!'

"Then she heard some small bells rattle.

"'Husband,' said she, 'I think now that a ghost has taken our son.'

"'You gave him to the ghost,' said he, 'and of course he has taken him. It serves you right.'

"Then the mother cried again. 'He is in the Anung-ite's ear,' said she, 'and I shall try to get him.'

"So the next night she hid in the wood-pile with a knife in her hand. She heard something whistling and crying, 'Hin! Hin!' and saw the giant come and stand by the lodge. He was so long that he could look down the smoke hole at the top. She jumped out and caught hold of his leg with both hands and screamed to her husband, who came very fast. They cut the giant's legs, and stuck a sharp stick into one, and pulled him down and tied him very strong. They kept him till the dark was gone; then they saw he was a very frightful monster, with a coat of long, thick hair, except on his faces. They split his ears and found their son in one of them. But he was very lean and weak, and he had begun to turn into an Anung-ite, so he only lived a little while.

"As soon as they had taken out their son they piled very lots of sticks on the fire, and pulled the giant onto them, and very fast he was all on fire. And they were glad to see him burn. Many things flew out of the fire — all round — like sparks. There were porcupine quills, bags, feathers, arrows, pipes, birds, axes, war clubs, necklaces, all kinds of beads —" the myth-teller

closed the list for want of breath, while a pleasurable horror filled the dormitory.

"That scares us very lots, but not enough," said Jane, with chattering teeth.

"Can you not tell one much more frightful?" thirsted Sarah.

"Tokee! how hard you are to scare this night," exclaimed the myth-teller in amazement. "I shall tell one more —a very, very hideous one indeed — about a man ghost that was all bare bones, without a speck of skin and flesh."

"Dear me, please don't, Amelia," Lilian said. "The girls won't sleep a wink all night."

But the Bone Ghost was demanded in a clamorous whisper from all sides, and the myth-teller plunged into the gruesome tale.

"THE BONE GHOST."

"Once a young man went alone on the war-path. And at night he lay down in the woods. He heard a voice, that sounded like a woman's, crying in the middle of the night, 'My son! my son!' But he stayed right where he was, and kept putting wood on the fire. He lay with his back to the fire, and had his gun close by. He tore a hole in his blanket large enough to peep through.

"Soon he saw coming what looked like a woman. She wore a skin dress with a long

fringe. A buffalo robe was fastened round her waist — this way."

Amelia suddenly stood upon the bed, and seized the bed blanket, pinning it about her waist.

"She had a necklace of very large beads, and her leggings were covered with porcupine quills. Her robe was pulled over her head this way."

The myth-teller hid her head beneath the blanket and stepped down on the floor.

"The man lay very still, with his legs stretched out. She came and stood by him."

Here Amelia glided down the passage till she stood by Sarah, who adroitly slipped beneath the bedclothes, keeping one ear open.

"She took him by one foot and raised it ver-r-y sl-o-o-w. She let go of it, and it fell as if he was dead. Two times more she raised it — but just as still as Sarah was the man. Then she pulled a rusty knife from the front of her belt, and grabbed his foot — this way," clutching Sarah's foot beneath the bedclothes. "She was going to lift it up and cut it, when the man jumped up and shouted: —

"'What are you doing?'

"And he shot her very quick. Away she ran, crying: —

"'Yun! yun! yun! yun! yun! yun!'"

Lost in the excitement of the moment, Amelia

fled along the whole length of the passage, crying like the wounded ghost.

"Ee! you must not — they will hear you in the teachers' part — and Mrs. Averill will come," said Inez from the end bed, falling weakly down at the approaching terror, and waking the twin, who slept with her.

"The man lay down and covered up his head, but he could not sleep," went on the myth-teller, winding in and out among the beds. "When dark was gone, he raised his eyes and saw a burial scaffold just above him, with the blankets and everything ragged and dangling. And he thought: —

"'Is this the ghost that came to me?'"

Suddenly a light was seen emerging from the teacher's hall and shining through the transom.

"Mrs. Averill!" was the whispered warning.

Amelia dived into the nearest bed, and the score of girls went down beneath the covers.

Lilian felt herself pulled crosswise of the bed and smothered in a quilt by Katy and Louise.

Mrs. Averill stepped into the dormitory with the lamp in hand, looking round with much concern.

"Did any one cry or call?" she asked.

As there was no response, and all appeared to be asleep, she turned away, to meet Miss Hartford hastening through the hall.

"Is any one hurt or ill?" she said anxiously.

"I don't know," Mrs. Averill replied. "We heard cries, most distinctly, in our room. They seemed to come from the north dormitory, but all is quiet in there."

"I heard them, and I fancied from the sound that some one was in pain. They must have come from another dormitory."

They passed across the hall and through the middle and south dormitories where the small girls slept.

"Perhaps some child was crying in her sleep," said Mrs. Averill, as they discovered nothing.

"And the young man knew the ghost had come from the burial scaffold," resumed the myth-teller when she could safely take the floor again. "Another night he had to stay in the woods. Of course he made a bright fire and sat down by it.

"All at once he heard some very loud whistling. He shouted, 'Who comes there?' but got no answer. The man had some wasna" (pounded dried buffalo meat and wild cherries mixed with grease) "and very lots of tobacco. So when the whistler, who was a man ghost, came and asked for food, he gave him some, and filled a pipe for him. It was the same ghost that the man had shot. It had been just cheating, — like it was a woman.

"When the ghost had eaten the wasna, he took the pipe and held it by the stem, and the man saw his hand was bones, without a speck of skin and flesh. And his robe fell off to his waist, and he was all bare bones. When the ghost smoked he did not open his lips, but the smoke poured out through his ribs. Then the ghost said to the man: —

"'Ho! we must wrestle together. If you throw me, you shall kill your enemies and steal their horses.'

"And the man said he would wrestle, and made up a big fire. Then the ghost rushed at him" — again the myth-teller swept the passage, bringing up beside Jane — "and grabbed him with his bony hands — this way."

"Ee-ah! do not grab me. I am scare enough thees time," gasped Jane, recoiling from the outstretched hands.

The myth-teller kindly spared Jane, seeing that her greed for horrors was appeased, and glided back to Sarah.

"And grabbed him with his bony hands"; reechoing the clause that she might seize the latter victim. "Of course he pinched him very hard — this way." If Sarah was in agony, she did not wince. "But the man was very brave, like Sarah. He tried to push off the ghost, who had strong legs.

When the ghost was dragged near the fire he got weak, but when he dragged the man into the dark he got strong again.

"The man was so busy fighting he could not stop to tend the fire, and it kept getting lower and lower, and the ghost kept getting stronger and stronger.

"At last the man got so tired he thought he could not fight any more, but just then he saw it was getting day. Very hard once more he tried, and dragged the ghost near the fire and kicked a stick onto the coals. Once more the fire blazed up, and the ghost fell down and his bones all came apart — this way."

The myth-teller collapsed on the bed, to feel a shudder stir the covers separating her from Sarah, and to hear a smothered shriek from Nancy.

"After that, when the man went to war, he could always kill his enemies and steal their horses. And that is why the Indians believe what ghosts have said," was the happy conclusion when the myth-teller had arisen from her disjointed state.

"Dear me! do go to sleep this minute, girls," begged Lilian, in dismay that she had lent her presence to the hide-and-seek performance, with results surprising to herself.

For all she knew that myths and legends were

impossible, she had really felt no slight anxiety for the rescue of the small rogue from the giant's cavernous ear, and had been as highly wrought up as the others by the myth-teller's dramatic personation of the Bone Ghost.

"I shall talk no more, for I am very weak inside," declared Amelia, going back to bed exhausted by the play of her emotions on an empty stomach. "I wish I had the wasna that the Bone Ghost ate."

"I, too," was the united murmur from all sides.

"Shee! you must not wish to eat now," Sarah said. "Two times more have we to fast."

"But we can wish for the Indian hash, if we do not eat it," Nancy stretched her conscience to observe.

Lilian sought her corner to retire in haste; but while she was unbuttoning her shoes she heard strange sounds resembling hollow whistles, frequently cut off and then renewed, arising from below the windows.

There was a quick stir in the dormitory. Lilian looked and saw the girls all peering from behind the window curtains. She made a peep-hole through her curtains, joining in the reconnoitre. She drew a short, sharp breath at what she saw.

A frightful vision flitted in the shadow of the building, giving out the singular whistles.

"The wa-na-gi! — the ghost walk!" said the girls in shrill, excited whispers.

"The wah-kon — burn the wah-kon!"

There had been no fire for several days, but the stove was full of litter gleaned from sweeping, and there was kindling in the woodbox. There were matches in the safe above the bureau, and Amelia flew to get one, while a dozen hands stuffed in the kindlings and collected cedar twigs. In a trice a fire was started and the twigs were laid upon the stove. A suffocating smoke arose and Sarah ventured to a window, raising it to let the fumes float down and drive the shape away.

"It will not go — it stays right there," was her alarming report.

"Shoes and moccasins; they will smell worse," said Amelia wildly.

Several shoes were fished out from beneath the beds and set upon the stove, while Jane and Nancy groped for moccasins in the closet. Very soon a sickening odor of burnt leather mingled with the fumes arising from the cedar.

But the vision lingered, keeping up the weird, sepulchral whistles.

"I'll shoot it with the gun!" determined Sarah rashly, as a last resort.

Mr. Averill's gun was in a closet in a private section of the upper hall. The door was unlocked

as the key had been mislaid and Mr. Averill had no thought that any girl would venture to intrude upon his ammunition closet.

Sarah wrapped herself in a blanket and pushed away the bed with which the door was barricaded, darting for the gun. She was back within a minute with the loaded weapon. Lilian was aghast, but powerless to hinder her.

The ghostly figure was now whistling between the two end windows, one of which was close to Lilian's corner. Sarah rushed that way, Amelia scurrying ahead to raise the window.

In her eagerness to carry out the Indians' usual method of dispelling specters, Sarah had the gun all pointed, with her finger on the spring. Some one jogged her elbow, and there was a most appalling flash and crash that seemed to rend the dormitory.

CHAPTER VIII.

FASTING.

THE superintendent and his wife were reading in their room when the explosion in the dormitory reached their ears.

"A gun at this time in the evening?" wondered Mrs. Averill. "How near it sounded."

"Dolphus has returned from the fort and is firing at some animal prowling round the building, I suppose," said Mr. Averill. "He has declared war on those troublesome cats, and perhaps he was exterminating one of them. They have increased to an alarming number, and I fear they will resemble the Pied Piper's force if something isn't done."

The wood-piles and out-buildings were infested by a horde of wild and hungry cats, supposed to be descendants of domestic cats and kittens, which had been relentlessly cast off as an encumbrance too great to be transported sixty miles when the agency had been removed. The white man had imposed this pest upon the mission. Indian cats there are none, as the red man has a superstitious prejudice against the feline race.

"I think I must be nervous," Mrs. Averill re-

marked, unable to resume her book; "it seems as if I smell smoke, or a most peculiar odor. Did you look about, as usual, before putting out the lights below?"

Mr. Averill had not time to answer ere the door-knob rattled, turned all ways, then yielded, and the twin walked in. She was shaken from her wonted calmness, and was holding up her long white nightgown with a nervous hand.

"Amelia tell about the Bone Ghost, and the long girls and the meedle-size am very scare," she tremblingly reported. "And the wa-na-gi come and wheestle outdoors. And the girls burn the wah-kon and some school shoes and some moccasins. But the ghost will be wheestling all the time and would not go away. So Sarah get the gun to shoot it; and the gun go off in the dormitory, and I do not know if it keel some girl."

Mr. Averill suppressed a groan while starting from his chair, and Mrs. Averill seized the lamp and flew along the halls. She was met by Lilian, who had followed Alomina through the door which opened from the dormitory closet. Lilian looked extremely pale and terrified.

"I tried to light the lamp to see if any one is hurt, but the girls have used up all the matches. Oh, dear, dear, please come!" she cried hysteri-

cally, pursuing Mrs. Averill through the closet to the smoking dormitory, with the twin behind her.

Lilian swept the scorching shoes and moccasins and the cedar from the stove into the coal-hod, flinging wide a window to let out the smoke, while Mrs. Averill looked about in dread.

The gun was lying on the floor, but she saw no signs of any accident. The girls were all in bed, tightly buried in the bedclothes.

"Let every girl who is not hurt get out of bed and stand up," she commanded sternly and distinctly. "I must be obeyed at once."

There was a prompt upheaval of the bedclothes, and all the girls alighted on their feet. Their dusky faces wore a blanched hue, and they looked about them in a scared, bewildered way. Mrs. Averill drew a breath of thankfulness that all were spared.

"That will do; you may go back to bed," she said more gently.

At that moment Jane, who had meandered into bed with Hester in the general commotion, cried: —

"Tokee! the loo-oking glass; the beeg ha-ole. She have shoot it in the meedle."

The shot had struck the mirror to the bureau, piercing it precisely through the center.

Lilian flew to tell the welcome news to Mr. Averill, who was pacing up and down the hall,

awaiting tidings from the scene of the disaster. She was still hysterical, and she seized him by the little finger, giving it a joyful squeeze.

"O Mr. Averill, dear Mr. Averill! she hasn't hurt a hair of their heads. It's no one but the looking-glass; she didn't mean to shoot it. Please forgive her. Oh, dear, I'm so very too happy!" and she laughed and cried together.

Mr. Averill wiped the perspiration from his brow in unspeakable relief.

"You are very much excited, Lilian," he said. "You would better go into the sitting-room and calm yourself. You may tell me all about it presently."

He turned to speak with Mrs. Averill, and to take the gun from her. He placed it in a closet in his office, then he hastened to explore the grounds to see if anything which a deluded fancy could convert into an apparition wandered there. His search was unsuccessful.

Lilian went into the sitting-room, and was surprised, on looking at the clock, to find it past her bedtime by an hour or more.

"I am more to blame than any of the girls, for I haven't been to bed at all," she said to Mr. Averill when he came to talk with her.

"Were you listening to the ghost stories that Amelia told?" he asked.

"Yes," she answered. "I was sitting on the bed with Katy and Louise."

"You were deeply interested, I suppose."

Lilian felt inclined to look down in embarrassed silence, but she braced herself, and met his look of kind surprise with penitential frankness.

"I was very too sorry for the bad boy in the Anung-ite's ear, and I forgot where I was when the young Indian man was wrestling with the Bone Ghost — and his bones all came apart — on Sarah's bed."

Mr. Averill compressed his lips, and did not smile.

"And after you were thoroughly excited by the ghost tales, you were quite in sympathy with the girls when they imagined that there was a specter out of doors?"

She stopped to ponder on the unaccountable object that had led the girls to such extreme measures in the dormitory.

"Do you think you saw anything remarkable?" pursued he.

"Yes," she was compelled to say.

"How did it appear?"

"Oh, truly awful. It was dressed in white, and was all bent over like an old, old person. And it had a very yellow skin and fiery eyes. It was grinning, and its grin was all on fire — like

its eyes; and it was whistling — right while its fiery mouth was stretched wide open."

Mr. Averill half raised his eyebrows with increased surprise.

"Where was this truly awful something?" he inquired.

"This side of the storehouse, when I saw it. I peeped just once — I was too scared to peep again."

"I'll step to the cottage, and see if Dolphus is in bed," he said, upon reflecting for a moment. "I have made him the scapegoat once in thinking he had fired the gun, but perhaps he caused the scare. He was to bring a sack of lime from the fort, and I directed him to take it to the storehouse. He may have had that on his back. He wears a light gray overcoat, and possibly some lime had sifted through the sack and powdered him a little. He would hardly have gone to the storehouse without a lantern. No doubt that shed a light across his face, and made the fiery countenance of your imagination. Dolphus is a merry whistler."

Lilian shook her head in puzzled contradiction. "It couldn't have been Dolphus with the lime-sack. And it wasn't whistling merrily,— oh, no. It sounded kind of smothered and short-breathed. I've never in the world believed in ghosts,— and I don't see how this could be a real ghost-walk,— but, oh, dear, I don't know what to think!"

"Well, Lilian, it is time you were asleep," said Mr. Averill very patiently. "I trust that there will be no more disturbance in the dormitory, though a close watch will be kept by Mrs. Averill and Miss Hartford through the night."

They arose, and Lilian was about to leave the room, but she stopped to speak again.

"Mr. Averill," she faltered, "I should feel much better to be disciplined for disappointing you and Mrs. Averill so much. And then, if you would trust me just the same as ever, I would try so hard to do as you both wish. And, if again I disappointed you, would you remember, please, that always have I talked and played and worked with Indian girls, who do not understand so well as white girls, though they truly want to learn the right way. I do not know if I can ever learn the right way."

In her tense concern she dropped somewhat into the speech and accent of the Indian children, and there was a touching pathos in her voice. The superintendent did not gaze unmoved upon the wistful face of this unconscious little fair girl who had strayed into the wild Indian country and had been committed to his care.

He had become her guardian fourteen months before, when he and Mrs. Averill had come to take charge of the mission work, from their camp school on another reservation.

The retiring superintendent and his wife had taken up the arduous labor at the mission twelve years previously, in vigorous strength, with hair unstreaked with gray, and with unwrinkled faces. They were leaving it in broken health, with prematurely gray hair, with many careworn lines upon their faces, but their hearts were still unwearied.

"I know you will be tender with our little brown maids and our little fair girl Lilian," Mr. Hildreth had assured the new young superintendent and his girlish wife, who held her beautiful boy baby in her arms. "Lilian was a wee clinging lassie when she came to us, and we took turns rocking her to sleep, my wife and I; and many of our bright, confiding older girls have grown up in the school. We took them from the teepes and the huts as little wild, reluctant creatures, with a terror of the white man in their eyes."

"We shall seek most earnestly to carry out your plans and methods and to keep in sympathy with our pupils," Mr. Averill answered.

"May God bless you and preserve your strength," said Mr. Hildreth fervently.

And the new young superintendent and his gray-haired predecessor sealed the covenant with clasped hands.

At the parting Lilian wept in Mrs. Hildreth's

arms, and the Indian girls cried softly in their aprons. Then the whole school stood about the stile and strained their eyes to catch a last glimpse of the "kind white father and white mother" passing down the range and out of sight. When they were lost to view behind a distant ridge, the older girls passed quietly into the music-room, and Lilian played the organ and they joined in singing Mr. Hildreth's favorite hymn: —

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love."

Mr. Averill's tenor and his wife's contralto buoyed the faltering young voices as the hymn went on: —

"When we asunder part
It gives us inward pain,
But we shall still be joined in heart
And hope to meet again."

Thus the Averills had assumed the guidance of the Indian pupils of the mission, and the one fair little alien in their midst.

"I fully realize that you are in a difficult position, Lilian," Mr. Averill now said, when he could trust himself to speak. "I am seriously in doubt if we should leave the white rose with the sandflowers any longer. Mrs. Averill and I are thinking it might be arranged to send you away from

the reservation to a white girls' school. Would you like to go?"

"Oh, I couldn't leave the dear mission — not this year, at least," said Lilian, looking startled. "Please don't send me off so soon. I'll be real good — indeed I will," she promised, in the child-like way this gentle girl of fifteen sometimes had.

"No doubt of that, my little girl," he smiled. "We should be loth to part with you, but I fear it is not best to keep you."

"I couldn't go while I'm the keeper of the lock, you know," she further urged.

"You couldn't take the troublesome relic with you and return it by express?" he queried ruefully.

"Oh, no; Aunt Losa wouldn't trust it on the railroad. And there's something else" — thinking of the hidden treasure to be searched for. "Nothing that will give you trouble — you'll be glad. I'll tell you all about it, — you and Mrs. Averill, — though Clark thinks we'd better keep it rather secret. There comes Dolphus now. I hear his horse."

They looked from the window and saw the young mission farmer riding past with the sack of lime across his saddle.

"I was very sure he wasn't it," said Lilian, returning to the specter.

She said good night and went to bed, leaving Mr. Averill to weigh her evidence of the extraordinary vision of the evening.

The dormitory door was partly open, and Miss Hartford sat quite near it by a table in the hall, writing to her mother in the East. She smiled at Lilian and placed a cautious finger on her lips. A hush had settled on the dormitory for the night. Lilian slipped her shoes off in the hall and stole along the passage in her stockings, scarcely venturing to breathe.

When Miss Hartford formed the school in line to march into the dining-room next noon, one pupil was conspicuously absent.

"Sarah Spider is in the think-room," was the whispered information from the twin, who toed the mark between the play-room and the music-room, with Jane in front of her and Inez in the rear. "Meester Averill take her when she go upstairs to get her apron when she come from Sunday school."

The twin had witnessed Sarah's exit from the upper hall into the teachers' part with Mr. Averill, and had pushed the door ajar to watch.

The whisper spread, and in a moment all had notice that the eminent daughter of the Two Kettle chief was a prisoner in the large square closet off the front hall, where a girl of trouble-

some proclivities was sometimes asked to sit and muse upon the error of her ways. The "think-room" had a pensive light admitted through a transom, calculated to encourage meditation. The key was never turned upon the thinker, who was placed upon her honor to remain in strict retirement until permitted to emerge. The honor of an Indian girl, although unique, is strong in most respects, and there was no case on record of a prisoner's premature escape.

The fasting and the strong excitement of the previous night had worn upon the large and middle-sized girls, and their faces had a pinched and wistful aspect as they viewed the tempting dinner spread upon the tables, prettily arranged with fruit and candy; but, according to the rigorous penance prescribed by Sarah, all turned down their plates. The large girls who presided at the tables waited on the small girls, after which they drank the cup of milk the fasters had allowed themselves, then sat in listless attitude with downcast eyes.

Lilian and Katy shared the honors of the table next the teachers'. Lilian filled her plate for Katy, passing it along the table through the small girls' hands, imploring her by signs to eat, but Katy sadly shook her head and passed it back.

"Dear me, Herbert, they aren't going to taste

the dinner, when they've planned for it so eagerly in honor of your birthday," Mrs. Averill said to Mr. Averill in distress. "Is it possible that they can go without another meal?"

Mr. Averill arose amid a breathless hush and said in a supremely quiet tone: —

"It does not please us to have the girls go hungry, and because they fast it does not prove that they are sorry they have disobeyed. If they are sorry, they can prove it in a better way by taking care to keep the rules hereafter, and to cheerfully do as they are asked by those who know what is best for them."

So saying, he resumed his seat.

"Tokee! of course we wish to please them," Nancy whispered down the table to Amelia, "but how can we eat when we have held up the right side that we will not?"

"An Indian does not break a fasting promise, and we cannot eat," Amelia whispered back.

In the absence of the chief's daughter the fasters looked to the myth-teller as the controller of the penance. She did not turn up her plate, nor did the others, and the fast continued, though with much regret upon the part of all that they were so dishonoring Mr. Averill's birthday, and perplexing those whom they really wished to please.

CHAPTER IX.

THE DOUGHNUT RAID.

"SEE how it shine," said little Anna, holding up a carving knife which she had scoured with ardor. "Meeses Averill say we knife and fork girls do well thees moon. We shall change work yesterday — I mean to-morrow — and again I shall not scour thees knife."

"Again I shall not grind the meat," observed Jane, while she leaned her elbows on the meat mill to survey the carving knife with approbation. "If I am a dormitory girl next moon, I shall like that very."

"Again I shall not wash this pot," said Katy, as she turned a huge black kettle upside down upon the table, giving it a farewell rub. "So clean is it upon the tip-top of the bottom that you all shall see what I shall dare to do with it. Look, now, how Bertram takes a ride."

She placed the kettle on the floor, seized upon the yellow-haired school baby, trotting through the kitchen, set him on the kettle, and began to push it nimbly round the room.

"Dear me!" said Mrs. Averill, coming in and

springing to the rescue of her baby. "Bertram is all spick-and-span to call upon the ladies at the fort. His white frock will be soiled." She snatched the baby from his perch and viewed the dainty, lace-trimmed frock with concern.

It was as snowy white as ever, and the kitchen force clapped hands in chorus with a burst of gleeful laughter.

"Ee! She thinks I have smut on the wrong side of my soup pot," Katy cried. "I have washed it very lots of dinner-times this moon so-o har-rd, and scraped and scoured it very clean indeed."

"It is the cleanest kettle in the two Dakotas, I am very sure," said Mrs. Averill, joining the girls in making merry at her needless start.

The kitchen force that month had done its utmost to surpass the record of all other forces in the history of the school. Hester's forty loaves of bread each day were marvelously light and white. Inez's pies and doughnuts were the wonder of the school. The private dishes girls had made the teachers' glass and china shine with more than wonted brightness, and the general crockery girls had placed the pupils' dishes on the shelves in spotless order day by day.

"The kitchen girls have done surprisingly good work this month — mostly under Lilian's manage-

ment," said Mrs. Averill to the superintendent as he brought the wagon to the door in readiness for driving to the fort; "and the dining-room and dormitory girls have done about as well. I truly think there never were such neat and capable Indian girls as ours. Tie the horses, Herbert, and go in and praise the bread which Hester has just taken from the oven. I will be putting on my hat and Bertram's coat and cap."

The merry voices ceased their chatter as the superintendent stepped into the kitchen, and the girls stood motionless, regarding him with shy intentness.

Hester had arranged the forty loaves upon the cooking table, and was about to spread the bread cloth over them when Mr. Averill stayed her hand.

"Mrs. Averill wishes me to see the bread," he said. "My mother used to say that good, light bread, well baked, would be the color of an oak leaf when the frost has painted it a golden brown. That seems to be the way with this." He viewed the plump, sweet-smelling loaves approvingly, while Hester's dusky face grew timorously bright. "I wish the President of the United States could drop down at the mission and enjoy a feast of Hester's bread and see what Indian girls can do." He cast his eyes about the kitchen to inspect the general good order. "Don't you wish so, girls?"

"Yes, Mr. Averill," replied the kitchen force in a demure chorus. They had been well drilled in responses.

"The school has done good work in every way this month. We think you mean to try as hard next month to do whatever may be given you with cheerful patience. Are we right in thinking so?"

"Yes, Mr. Averill," chimed the level voices a second time.

Mrs. Averill now joined the superintendent, ready for the drive.

"Now very lots of fun we will have," said Jane, as the wagon left the door. "No school there will be thees afternoon, for Mees Hartford's head is seek with a pain in its back, and she have gone to bed."

"But Mrs. Averill said we must all stay inside the grounds," said Katy. "And the long girls and the middle-sized are to watch the short girls, so they will keep out of mischief; and Miss Peck will watch the long girls and the middle-sized."

"Miss Peck is cutting out very lots of arms and naiks for the sewing class, so she cannot stop to watch us very sharp," replied Jane; "and one side of Miss Peck cannot hear, so we can laugh and scream very loud downstairs, and all sing deeferent. If we have a hymn cat concert, I choose, —

"'Soon from care and labor free,
Lord, I woo-uld commoon with thee.'"

"Oh, please don't have a cat concert," Lilian begged. "It isn't right to have fun with the sacred hymns, and you make such hideous noises."

Lilian had begun the grave concoction of a teachers' cake, and was standing by a little table near the tall safe, creaming butter in a yellow bowl. She was daintily enveloped in a freshly ironed Mother Hubbard apron and a cooking cap of blue and white checked gingham.

"No," said Katy, from her sink across the room, "Miss Delaney says a hymn cat concert is very unreligious and unmel-odious. We must keep still and fast finish our work. Miss Peck so loved the Indians that she came to be our sewing teacher, and very wrong it would be to make a too loud noise, because one side cannot hear a watch tick."

The combined advice of the fair little manager, who held the post of honor in the kitchen by pacific measures, and the tins and kettle girl appeared to have due weight, and for a time the work went on in quiet order. Then there came an unexpected crisis in the lives of these industrious young kitchen maids.

"Mr. Averill did not want the President of the United States to have a doughnut," Inez mur-

mured, as she closed the oven door upon the coffee she was browning with a jealous little slam. "He would feast the President on bread alone — bread — bread! How sick the President would get of bread! Mr. Averill did not ask to see my doughnuts."

"They were in the pantry," Hester hastened to explain. "Much smarter have you worked than I, to get so many doughnuts fried before the dinner bell."

"He thinks my doughnuts are not fit to eat," pursued the injured little pastry cook. "He thinks they are so-o to-o-u-g-h, and are not sweet. He thinks they soak fat, and are very horrid."

"Kee! they could not soak fat and be tough," discriminated Katy. "If they soaked fat they would be too tender."

"But he is a man and does not know that. If you offered him a pony, not one doughnut would he eat."

"Because he do not like doughnuts," Jane observed. "He say they are un-re-jest-able."

"No one wants to eat my doughnuts," still lamented Inez.

"I do," Katy strove to soothe her.

"They are always very nice. I wish I had one right now — if it is so soon since dinner."

"You can take one if you will," suggested

Sarah, who was beating frosting for the teachers' cake.

"Tokee! she dare not — and you dare not," Inez said in great surprise. "No one ever touches doughnuts in between two meals."

"I should dare to if I wanted to," was Sarah's stately answer. "There is nothing that a Two Kettle Indian dare not do, of course."

"Ee! she talks that way, when she was in the think-room not one week ago," cried Inez, taking fire. "I am a Spanish Indian and I am as brave as a Two Kettle. She shall see that I dare to dare her to take a doughnut!"

She flew into the pantry, bringing out the large, deep can which held the week's supply of doughnuts. She impetuously danced a chair into the middle of the room, set the can upon it, and drew herself erect with scintillating eyes.

"Now, then, if you dare! Ho' wo'! Ho' wo'! E'ya-ha-he! E'ya-ha-he!" She challenged the majestic princess, breaking into the forbidden Teton in her strong excitement. "All of you can take as many doughnuts as you dare to," was the general invitation which she rashly flung about the kitchen.

Sarah cast her egg-beater recklessly down and plunged into the can. Jane followed, likewise the remainder of the kitchen force — large, and

middle-sized, and small, save Katy and the bread girl. Katy sprung to the defense of Inez, slapping with her half-wrung dishcloth right and left. Hester hovered helplessly above her bread, as if she feared that also were in danger. Lilian stood in petrified amazement, unable to exert the least authority.

Sarah seized three doughnuts, rushing out of doors and waving them aloft, the other raiders at her heels.

"You can have doughnuts! Any one can have as many doughnuts as they want," she shrieked.

The large and middle-sized girls not at work were gathered at the swing, a few rods from the kitchen door. They started for the house upon the run.

Lilian now bethought herself and sprung to lock the outside door, hasping that which led into the laundry adjoining the kitchen. Thus the raid was checked a space, while Inez viewed, with feelings which defy description, her diminished store of doughnuts.

All at once the cellar door burst open and back rushed the raiders, led by Sarah, with a most alarming reinforcement. They had entered through the outside door into the cellar. The doughnuts carried out of doors had been bestowed upon the younger children, and the raiders were now bent on capturing a new supply.

Inez seized the can and tried to take it back into the pantry, but the mob swooped down upon it and upset it on the floor. The doughnuts flew all ways, and the girls went down in an excited scramble after them.

Suddenly the hall door opened and revealed the superintendent and the matron with a party from the fort. They had met outside the gate as Mr. Averill and his wife were driving from the grounds.

The party was composed of Mrs. Major Lile, a tall, grave officer from Washington who had come North upon official business, and Lieutenant Frisbie and his bride. The tall, grave officer was Mrs. Frisbie's uncle.

"This is our kitchen," Mrs. Averill began — then she stopped in deep astonishment.

The girls rebounded into order with their hands replete with doughnuts, which they hid behind them in a shame-faced way.

"We wanted you to take the kitchen unawares and see us in our every-day estate," said Mr. Averill, coming to his wife's assistance. "Everything was running smoothly when we left, a little while ago, but you perceive there has been a sudden revolution."

He gazed unmoved upon the remnant of the doughnuts scattered on the floor and trampled under foot.

"We army people rather look for sudden revolutions up this way," replied the senior officer, with a reassuring glance at Lilian, standing to one side with the cake dish pressed against her throbbing heart. It was plain to see that she had been a powerless opponent of the revolution.

"Lilian, Mrs. Major Lile and you are good friends," Mrs. Averill remarked, turning to the pleasant-looking lady of the post, who had often visited the school, and had petted Lilian quite enough to spoil her, had she been of different material. "Mrs. Frisbie, this is Lilian Swift Bird, a pupil of the school, and our assistant industrial teacher, in the absence of the regular teacher, Miss Delaney. Colonel Mayo, Lilian, and Lieutenant Frisbie."

Lilian rallied and went through the introduction with surprising bravery, apologizing only with her eyes for the condition of affairs. Something in her face so took possession of the senior officer that he was moved to step across the space dividing them to shake hands. Lilian's hand clung to his with sugary persistency, for she had plunged it unawares into the cake dish in her agitation at the turmoil in the kitchen.

"Dearie me, I didn't know I'd had it in the teachers' cake dough!" she exclaimed in bright confusion as she pulled it from his grasp.

"Never mind, my little girl," said Colonel Mayo, with a pleasant smile beneath his iron gray mustache. "It's the sweetest handshake I have had for many a day."

"Now you'll have to wash," she ruefully observed, much to the amusement of the military four. The young bride sparkled with enjoyment of the novel situation, and could scarcely keep from kissing the delightful little nonplussed manager in the Mother Hubbard apron and the cooking cap. "I'll pour some hot soft water in my basin — it is granite iron, but I scour it carefully every day — and you can wash your hands in that, and dry them on my cooking towel. It is span clean."

"Perhaps, dear, we had better take the colonel to the spare room," suggested Mrs. Averill.

"Oh, no," interposed the colonel; "the little industrial teacher has arranged it just right. I see she is used to managing."

Lilian poured the water with her clean left hand, and he washed his sticky right hand in the basin. Then she washed her own hands while the colonel dried his own on the towel. He observed with his discriminating eye that Lilian's hands were white and shapely and well cared for. He scanned her face more closely as her eyes were bent upon the basin, then he turned away in silence, giving Mr. Averill a glance of questioning surprise.

"Girls," said Mrs. Averill to the Indian pupils, standing like a group of statuary, with a downcast gaze, "will you say good afternoon to Mrs. Major Lile?"

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Major Lile," they intonated in a dreamy monotone, addressing with their eyes the scattered doughnuts and the upset can.

"Mrs. Lieutenant Frisbie."

"Good afternoon, Mrs. Lieutenant Frisbie."

Jane came out a word behind, delivering herself of "Freeze-bee," in a groping drawl.

"Colonel Mayo."

"Good afternoon, Colonel Mayo."

The dreamy voices melted to the softest murmur in saluting the distinguished-looking officer, who had been inspected by the downcast eyes from top to toe, by some mysterious sleight of vision.

"Lieutenant Frisbie, girls."

The young lieutenant well-nigh stilled the voices talking in their sleep.

"Good afternoon, Lieutenant Frisbie," was recited in a vanishing whisper.

When the introduction drill pertaining to the civilizing process was completed, Mr. Averill addressed the pupils in a pleasant tone: —

"As the doughnuts in your hands appear to have been on the floor, it is not best for you to eat

them, girls. You may put them in the pigs' pail after we have passed out. Inez will attend to clearing up the rest."

He spared the girls the punishment of filing to the pigs' pail in the presence of the guests and depositing their plunder.

The party left the kitchen, and as Mr. Averill closed the door behind him, every eye was lifted from the floor to watch the door knob till it ceased to turn. Then the wary little Teton maids bestirred themselves with sudden animation.

"Now, then, Miss Two Kettle, are you not very too 'shamed indeed?" cried Inez, as she seized the broom to sweep the wreckage of the doughnuts in a pile. "For a week the school will have no doughnuts, and the soldier officers and ladies will go off and say what pigs and wild Indians are being educated in this mission school."

"I am very 'shamed, of course, but I am not very too shamed indeed, for a Two Kettle Indian is too brave to take a dare. A Two Kettle may be ashamed, but not afraid to take a dare," descanted Sarah on the ethics of her tribe.

The girls obeyed the superintendent, one and all, and the large pigs' pail overflowed with doughnuts. To complete the havoc, Inez covered them with water, leaving them in soak.

Meanwhile, Lilian poured her cake into the pan

with hands made tremulous by some indefinite emotion which had seized her since the coming of the guests. She longed to drop her work and hover in the footsteps of the party passing through the building to observe the skill of the industrious young Indian girls in every branch of housework. Oh, to feast her eyes on every look and movement of the young bride she had dreamed of meeting in a different manner than amid the riot in the kitchen, and to watch the noble senior officer until she saw another winning smile dispel the sadness of his face!

"Lilian does not speak one word," Katy said to Hester, as the latter helped her bear her pan of dish-water to the drain outside the fence. Each grasped a handle of the pan, and they were swinging it between them, in an absent-minded way, slopping copious douses in the path. "Her cheeks are very bright red, and her eyes mean different thoughts from ours. Do you not think that Lilian is as beautiful as Mrs. Frisbie?"

"I cannot quite tell," Hester answered. "I was much too scared to look at Mrs. Frisbie very sharp. I was looking at the tall soldier officer, this way," peeping sidewise, "that got daubed with teachers' cake dough, and washed his hands in Lilian's basin. He is very nice, but I was much afraid of him."

"Mrs. Frisbie's eyes are very blue, and her hair is very yellow. Lilian's are a different kind; but they smile alike, and they have alike dimples in one side," mused Katy; "and they hold their heads so straight and brave, just like each other. Ee, I wish that I could hold my head that way and never be afraid. Tokee! there is no dish-water left to pour into the drain. We have spilt it all, and that was not the way. Slops inside the fence will make us have the fever."

CHAPTER X.

THE YOUNG MILITARY LADY.

"THE little miss with whom I shook hands in the kitchen seems entirely unlike your other pupils," Colonel Mayo said to Mr. Averill, as the party halted in the front hall to inspect the Indian curios hanging on the wall. "Surely she is not an Indian girl."

"Most evidently not," said Mr. Averill. "She was adopted by a full Indian and his wife when very young. It isn't known in what way they obtained her, but as the Sioux were then upon the war-path, it is supposed by some that she was captured from some traveler's wagon or a ranchman's home. It is thought the Indians may have killed the parents, thus preventing any effort to recover her. I have been told that Swift Bird was a peaceable Indian, and probably he had no part in capturing the child,— if such was the case,— but purchased her from one of the aggressors. He had lost his little girl about the age of Lilian, and he deeply mourned her death."

Colonel Mayo turned aside and made no answer for a time. He seemed to be examining a gaily

colored war bonnet said to have been worn by Crazy Horse, well known to fame.

Mrs. Frisbie left the beaded tunic she was viewing with much interest, and slipped her hand about her uncle's arm, clinging closely to his side.

"I was pursuing Indians farther west about that time," he presently responded, as he stroked his niece's slender fingers. "Sitting Bull required close attention. Are the foster parents of this little white girl living?"

"No," said Mr. Averill. "Swift Bird died about three years ago, and his wife soon followed him."

As the party passed into the parlor, Mrs. Frisbie spoke to Mrs. Averill, received a smiling answer, and slipped away.

The work was finished in the kitchen, save the baking of the teachers' cake, and Lilian was left alone. She was peeping in the oven to inspect the rising process, when she heard a flutter of soft garments and looked up, to see the young bride standing over her. She gave a rapturous little gasp and started up.

"Oh — oh — have you come back? I thought I shouldn't see you any more!" And quite oblivious that she had formed an intimate acquaintance with the young military lady only in her



COLONEL MAYO EXAMINED A GAILY COLORED WAR BONNET.

day dreams, Lilian seized her hands and squeezed them tightly, bursting into tears.

"Why, you poor, sweet little industrial teacher," pitied Mrs. Frisbie, drawing Lilian close to her; "are the naughty brown maids worrying you distracted? Come and sit here on the table and we'll talk it over, just as if we'd been acquainted all our lives."

They perched themselves upon the teachers' cooking table, scoured as white as ivory, and Lilian checked her tears and murmured confidentially: —

"It isn't that the girls are worrying me distracted — though the doughnut trouble was too awful — they are lovely, nearly always — but I've never had a white girl for a friend, and I heard that you were only eighteen, and before Lieutenant Frisbie went East to be married, he told the ladies at the fort, and they told Mrs. Averill, and she told me that you were very sweet and beautiful,"— the bride laughed merrily at the good report of her started by Lieutenant Frisbie,— "and I've been expecting you and thinking of you almost every minute in the day. I was afraid you'd have so many happy things to think of that I'd never have a chance to talk with you — but I wished and wished I might — and when I saw you there I knew my wish had come true, and I had to cry."

"You precious child!" exclaimed the sympathetic bride. "So you have been worrying over me, and not the naughty brown maids. I have heard about you and the interesting Indian girls, and I couldn't wait for Mrs. Averill to visit me, so I came right over — for I knew we needn't be the least bit formal out here on the plains. You and I will be the best of friends. I didn't have a chance to talk with you before, you were so busy helping Uncle Leverett out of his dilemma with the teachers' cake dough."

Here there was another merry laugh.

"Uncle Leverett hadn't heard about you, and you were a great surprise to him."

"Wasn't that dough too dreadful?" and the little manager struggled with her feelings. "But he was so nice and didn't look one bit displeased. I'm glad that Colonel Mayo is your uncle. Did he come with you?"

"Yes, but he is soon to leave. He will take the steamer up the river in the morning, and will return to Washington before the river closes."

"Dearie me, how you will miss him! He is fond of you, I know."

"Yes,— the dear man,— and I think the world of him," went on the bride, drawn to closer confidence by Lilian's wistful interest. "He is mamma's only brother. We have lived with him,

mamma and myself, since papa died, twelve years ago, except when we've been traveling abroad. Uncle Leverett was a captain up here in the Northwest during the Indian wars, but afterward he was assigned to duty in the East. He lost his wife and little daughter years ago, — but that is quite too sad to talk about. I smell your cake, my dear. Do you think it can be burning?"

"Oh, I hope not," jumping from the table. "I left the door ajar because the oven was too hot."

Mrs. Frisbie took a peep with Lilian, and beheld a culinary triumph risen to a glorious height.

"It takes my breath away," she said. "What makes it look so golden?"

"It is sunshine cake — all yolks. Sarah used the whites for frosting. I shall spread it on the cake when it is cool."

"However did you learn so much?" inquired the inexperienced bride, as they returned to the table. "You must teach me how to make a sunshine cake. I mean to borrow you as often as I can, and keep you for a good long visit every time. We'll have great times together in the kitchen — if cook will let us."

"Oh, how lovely!" Lilian said, in ecstasy.

"I wouldn't miss keeping house for the world," — with a matronly expression. "I brought a cook from Washington."

"I hope she won't get married to a soldier right away," said Lilian, with an air of grave concern. "That's the way they all do at the fort."

"Oh! Lieutenant Frisbie didn't tell me," in alarm. "I dare not think of it. But cook is neither young nor handsome, so I'll try to hope. May I hear about the doughnut trouble? Wasn't it too funny?" and a merry thought dispelled the bride's alarm.

"Oh, dear, it came so suddenly — just like a sand-storm," Lilian sighed. "The girls were all so good and fast at work. They didn't dream of such a thing," and she explained the raid.

"That was a sudden overturn," observed the laughing bride. "Where is the jealous little doughnut girl? Can't we comfort her some way?"

"She is hiding in the china closet, off the dining-room. She says she never will come out unless they drag her. There is nothing left but teachers' doughnuts; Inez made them, and they are delicious."

"Oh, I wonder if we couldn't have one. Uncle Leverett and I are fond of doughnuts, and of course Lieutenant Frisbie is. Mrs. Lile must like them, too. I'll ask Mrs. Averill."

The tender-hearted young military lady, bent upon consoling the afflicted doughnut girl at the

expense of all conventionality, now flitted from the kitchen.

As the teachers' cake was being taken from the oven, she returned.

"Mrs. Averill says we may have a doughnut. You and I will take them in when I have talked with Inez."

"Oh, she wouldn't talk with you," said Lilian; "she would be too frightened. Indian girls don't talk to any one unless they're well acquainted. And it takes a long, long time for them to get acquainted."

"Don't they ever talk to strangers?" Mrs. Frisbie asked.

"Never in the world, except to say 'Yes, ma'am,' and 'No, ma'am,' or 'Yes, sir,' and 'No, sir,' very low indeed, unless they answer all together. And they're dreadfully afraid of white men. They never talk to Mr. Averill — only Katy, who has been to Hampton, and is braver than the rest. But they talk to Mrs. Averill, and all the teachers, just as fast as can be. The small girls aren't a bit shy, it's only the large and middle-sized."

"What original young maids! They must be charming when they're not afraid of one. I mean to try my best to get acquainted with them all, and I shall call upon the doughnut girl at once."

Lilian led the way to Inez's hiding-place and

then withdrew, leaving the young military lady to the interesting task of seeking an acquaintance on short notice with an Indian school-girl.

Mrs. Frisbie found the closet door ajar, but heard no sound. She tapped upon the door, inquiring: —

"Little doughnut girl, may I come in?"

She was answered by a breathless silence.

"She doesn't say I may," talked Mrs. Frisbie to herself, in softly audible tones; "but she doesn't say I mustn't. We were introduced, and she said 'Good afternoon, Mrs. Frisbie,' so it isn't impolite to talk to her. I'm sure she will excuse me if I step inside."

She carefully invaded the retired nook. The doughnut girl was standing in a corner, with her face securely hidden in her hands.

"She turns her back and doesn't look at me, but I shall tell her right off what I wish," pursued the bride, still talking to herself while looking over Inez's shoulder. "Mrs. Averill says that Mrs. Major Lile, Colonel Mayo, Lieutenant Frisbie, and myself may have a teachers' doughnut, and I've come to ask if you are willing, as you made them all by yourself."

There was a long pause while the seeker waited hopefully. Then came a faint, astonished whisper from behind the slim, brown hands: —

"Tokee!"

"Oh, she says 'Tokee!' and that means something nice in Indian, of course. I wish I understood Dakota — but I'll have to guess. Does it mean 'I'm very willing?'"

Another pause, but shorter, then a longer whisper.

"Ee! it does not mean that," with increased astonishment.

The fingers parted, and a pair of large, bright, dusky eyes looked out at Mrs. Frisbie in a cautiously inquiring way.

"Oh!" rejoined the seeker in a disappointed tone. "Perhaps it means 'I am not willing,' and in that case Mrs. Major Lile, Colonel Mayo, Lieutenant Frisbie, and myself should go without a doughnut."

Inez's hands now parted company, and moved to one side, sheltering her small ears, and revealing to the bride the Spanish-Indian face of striking beauty she had noticed in the group of statuary.

"There are only two eggs to a pint of milk — you would not want to eat them — but it does not mean I am not willing," murmured Inez, growing interested in the bride's endeavor to interpret the peculiar exclamation, and forgetting to be wholly shy.

"Well, I'll guess once more." The fair brows

knit themselves in puzzled thought. "Tokee must mean, — 'How strangely you do talk — I am surprised at you.'"

"Ee! now you understand it."

Then the black eyes met the blue eyes with a roguish gleam, and the young "soldier lady" and the Indian girl were well acquainted.

Lilian was in a maze of gladness when they walked into the kitchen hand in hand. She had taken off her apron and her cooking cap, emerging in a trim condition in her linsey-woolsey frock.

Inez filled a plate with doughnuts, placing it upon a tray, while Lilian brought out plates and napkins. Then the little pastry cook, no longer jealous, stole away to muse upon the wondrous happening that the soldier officers and ladies cared to eat her doughnuts.

Later in the afternoon Clark alighted at the stile, where Lilian sat alone.

"You're just the one I want to see next, for I have no end of news to tell you," she exclaimed, making room for him upon the stile. "You are quite a stranger. What has kept you away since a week ago Saturday?"

"Business — till I couldn't rest. We've been cleaning house, and trying to get rid of moths. They're thicker than the frogs in Egypt in the storerooms, and I can't sleep nights I'm so dis-

tressed." Clark heaved an overworked housekeeper's sigh, and leaned his cheek upon his hand in feminine dejection. "I'm afraid they'll riddle all the government shoe leather, and a long Dakota winter stares the helpless Indian fellows in the face."

"Moths don't care for shoes," laughed Lilian, "but they'll eat the woolen socks. Are you all through house-cleaning?"

"No; we haven't hung Lincoln and his cabinet in the schoolroom, and I saw a spider's web behind the wardrobe in the large boys' dormitory. It was Baptiste's work to sweep it down, but he shirked it. Indians fight shy of spiders, fearing, if they kill one, a relative of the murdered insect will avenge its death."

"Not if they repeat the formula, or prayer," said Lilian. "They believe that when they need to kill a spider they must say, 'Iktomi Tunkansila, Wakinyanniktepelo,—O Grandfather Spider, the Thunder-beings kill you.' They say his spirit believes what has been told him, and it tells the other spiders, and they think it's no use to try to harm the Thunder-beings. The girls repeat the formula to keep from being bitten by the relatives."

"That's practising deception in a mission school and imposing on the spiders," Clark declared. "Mr. Averill ought to look into the matter."

"We'll begin our house-cleaning next week. We want to be in perfect order when the missionary comes. Miss Delaney says he's neater than a bandbox, and I think he must be, though I've never seen a bandbox; they don't bring them to the Indian country. He enjoys the nice clean cupboards, and he looked into the churn last time and praised the butter that had just come. He admired the girls' work-baskets that were in good order, and he seemed so interested in the feather-stitching on the yokes and collars of the new dresses that the sewing class were doing. Nancy's feather-stitches were all crooked and too long or too short, and he must have noticed them, but he looked another way and was too kind to seem surprised."

"It's natural he should want to see the girls trimmed up in proper shape, he is such a spruce-looking chap himself," said Clark irreverently. "What's all the news in this dull country?"

"Oh, I don't know where to start; I'm all mixed up in thought. But I'll begin with what has happened just now. The bride was here this afternoon, and she likes me. Only think of that!"

"She likes you? Is it possible?" in mock surprise. "Who is the bride? What sort, red or white? Where from? Which way? Oh, dear, I can't ask questions fast enough!"

He held his breath with girlish interest.

"Oh, please be serious, Clark, or I shall never get it straightened out," implored Lilian in a whirl. "I want to laugh and cry together, I'm so glad and sorry, and that's very nervous. Now I will begin again. The bride is from Washington. She lives at the fort. She is Mrs. Lieutenant Frisbie; only eighteen, and so beautiful. She came right while the girls were fighting for the doughnuts, and I was expected to keep order in the kitchen, and that makes me so distressed. Mrs. Averill hasn't said one word, nor Mr. Averill, and I don't know what they think.

"The large and middle-sized girls are in the schoolroom signing a petition, which the twin will take to Mr. Averill's office, asking him and Mrs. Averill to excuse them. They have had petitions in their letter-writing lessons, and they thought it would be nice to send one. Sarah and Inez were the bitterest enemies about the doughnuts, but they'd made it all up and were in the same seat writing the petition when I left the schoolroom.

"Oh, I haven't got to Colonel Mayo, the bride's uncle. Well, I went to carry in the teachers' doughnuts — the bride asked for them because Inez was so jealous, and that made Inez so glad that she made up with Sarah. I can't stop to tell you all about that, and Colonel Mayo had me sit right by him on the lounge, and he talked to me and I an-

swered, though I kept real quiet, for I am a school-girl and they weren't my company. He was very too nice and splendid, but he is going up the river in the morning, and I don't suppose I'll ever see him any more. I don't know why that makes me so sad, for he is just a stranger. I shall see Mrs. Frisbie, though, for she is going to borrow me as often as she can, and I'm to teach her how to make a sunshine cake, and that makes me very glad."

Clark sat in listening silence during Lilian's rambling attempt to make a long story short, and rubbed his forehead in a dazed way when she stopped, to find out where she was.

"I don't pretend to grasp it all, especially about the doughnut scuffle, but the full particulars may leak out later," he responded. "Is that all the news, — the bride, and Colonel Mayo, and the doughnuts?"

"No, indeed. I have been hunting for the treasure every time I could slip away, but I haven't found it, and Aunt Losa hasn't brought the chart. Uncle Seth has brought your trunk, of course, — for you've changed your cowboy clothes."

"Yes; he came washing day, and had a talk with Mr. Greely while I hung out sheets and pillow-cases. Aunt Losa will be here, for she always keeps a promise. Uncle Seth and she don't travel much together. She'll be likely to

come over with some Indian neighbors. Did the girls hold out to fast?"

"Every one, — the whole three meals. But they had the birthday dinner — what was left of it — at night; the twin ate three pieces of the fasters' pie and such a lot of their candy at dinner. They were all good, and ate their supper, — even Sarah, who was in the closet all the afternoon for firing the gun. O Clark, there's something else so very strange I don't know what to think of it. There was a ghost-walk scare the first night I had the lock."

She looked him very soberly in the face.

"We heard so over on our hill. That's what I'm trying to get at," he answered, with a look of like sobriety. "Some animal prowling round outside, wasn't it?"

"No; very different from any animal that ever lived. You can't imagine anything so hideous."

"Ah! you saw it, then? What sort of looking creature was it?"

"Oh, I can't begin to tell you. It was dressed in white, and had a fiery head, and its skin was yellower than an orange. It grinned and showed the brightest yellow teeth, and whistled in a frightful way."

"Tower of Babel! what a spectacle!" He turned his face away as if to dwell in solitary

thought upon the strange affair. "What does Mr. Averill think?"

"He thinks we must have been excited — Amelia had been telling ghost stories — and imagined it, but we didn't. Please to look this way, Clark," she insisted gravely. "It is impolite to turn your back and laugh when I am talking."

"Oh, excuse me, little madam," and he squared about and doffed his hat, dispelling his amusement. "What do you imagine the specter may have been?"

"I shan't try to explain. The girls are sure it was the ghost-lock from my trunk, but of course it wasn't. Mrs. Averill and the teachers have to keep watch every night, the whole school is so nervous. They are all right in the daytime, but they hardly speak above a whisper after dark."

"You say that Sarah fired a gun. I heard the report, or rumor, several days ago."

"'Twas Mr. Averill's gun. She meant to fire at the ghost, but it went off in the dormitory by mistake and struck the looking-glass right in the middle."

"Whew! she hit the bull's eye, sure enough." He risked another laugh. "The adventurous ghost was lucky to escape the bullet."

"Don't laugh," said Lilian, still more seriously. "It sounds as if you didn't care one bit, and Mrs.

Averill says it is a miracle that some one wasn't killed or badly hurt."

"Hoity-toity! if she isn't cross!" exclaimed Clark, dropping from the stile in vexed surprise. "I must behave myself, for now that she's associating with the bride from Washington, she's growing mighty critical."

"Now you're very aggravating. I should think you would be glad for me to have a lovely white girl for a friend. It is unkind and cowboyish to say I'm growing mighty critical." She gave her oval chin a stately little tilt.

"Well, then, I'll say you're growing quite disdainful, like the great majority of white girls. So good afternoon, Miss Lilian."

He raised his hat at arm's length with elaborate courtesy, and sprang upon his pony.

"Dearie me, I do believe we've quarreled," Lilian murmured to herself, when left alone. "How fast he rides — just like the wildest cowboy on the range. I wonder if the great majority of white girls are disdainful. As I've never known a single white girl, how am I to tell? Clark went to school with them till he was thirteen, so he ought to know. Poor Clark, I can't think what does ail him. I shall ask Mrs. Frisbie if the great majority of white girls are disdainful."

CHAPTER XI.

RESOLUTIONS.

DEAR Mr. Averill and Mrs. Averill: —

Whereas we, the undersigned, are afraid to talk to Mr. Averill, for he is a white man, and we are Indian girls, therefore resolved that we shall send a petition, and Inez and Sarah will be writing it, for they are the most to blame about the doughnuts.

"And whereas the school will have no doughnuts for one week, for they are in the pigs' pail, and Dolphus will be feeding them to the pigs this night, therefore resolved that we will very cheerfully eat fried mush in place of doughnuts, and resolved that we will not waste the syrup.

"And whereas we are very too shamed indeed that the soldier people saw us fighting for the doughnuts, resolved that we wish we had not done it.

"And whereas if Mr. Averill and Mrs. Averill will excuse us, Inez says again she will never dare Sarah to take as many doughnuts as she wants, and Sarah says again she will never tell Inez that

she shall not take a dare to take as many doughnuts as she wants.

"Though whereas Sarah is a Two Kettle Indian, she will not like to be afraid to take a dare, and whereas Inez is a Spanish Indian, she will not like to be afraid to give a dare.

"Resolved that we shall send this by the twin, though she says she will not take it unless Inez gives her the red beads she is wearing round her neck. And whereas the twin will break the string and lose the beads. And unless Sarah gives her the ring that cost ten cents, with a green set. And whereas it is very too big for the twin's finger, and she will lose that, too.

"Resolved that Katy shall sign this petition, for she slapped the girls' heads with her dishcloth, so whereas she will have to get a new one. But resolved that Hester shall not sign it, for she did not do a wrong thing, only push off one loaf of bread into the scrub-pail, for she was so scared to watch the fight.

"Whereas the scrub-pail was full of scrub-water, for Sarah had been cleaning up the gravy that Jane spilt, and broke the gravy dish, for it is Sarah's work to scrub the kitchen floor this moon, resolved that Jane was very too careless, and she is sorry. And resolved that Sarah should have emptied out the scrub-water, and she left it right

under one corner of the bread. So please excuse Hester, for the loaf that fell into the scrub-water is in the pigs' pail with the doughnuts.

"Good-by, kind friends. Please excuse us all, and we will try hard. But we are Indians, and we are different.

"P. S. Inez writes ten words, and Sarah writes ten words, so the petition is not alike.

"Inez writes the best." (Sarah.)

"Kee! Sarah writes the best." (Inez.)

"P. P. S. We will be waiting in the schoolhouse, and please send yes or no by the twin if you shall excuse us."

The large and middle-sized girls had signed the above curious document with many careful flourishes. The twin had brought it to the superintendent and the matron while they were consulting in the office, after the departure of their visitors. When they had read it, Mr. Averill dismissed the twin, with a message to the girls that he would presently address them in the schoolroom.

"Well, what follows?" Mrs. Averill inquired, when Alomina had dissolved from view.

"The common sequel — we shall be delighted to excuse them, since they seem to realize their error so profoundly," he responded, with a patient smile.

"But, Herbert, it was such a serious affair —

especially as our visitors from the fort witnessed it. Don't you think the rioters should be disciplined in some way, to impress them with a sense of our authority?"

"Possibly; but how?" he queried musingly. "We have made a number of experiments within five years concerning the judicious way of dealing with these rarest children in the universe. I respect your inventive faculty. Perhaps you can suggest a new plan, Margaret."

She gave herself to serious thought.

"We can't send them all to bed in the daytime, as they are needed elsewhere; nor can we consistently deprive them of a meal, after our late attempt to break the fast. And we couldn't put them all in the 'think-room,' unless they were imprisoned one by one as we could spare them from their duties. It would take about three weeks to expiate the sentence that way, and, aside from all our worry, it would be a little bit ridiculous.

"And Sarah's recent term of retrospection in the closet doesn't seem to have accomplished all we hoped for," Mr. Averill interjected.

"Sarah seems to be the leader. She might be expelled, but she would serenely return to the blanket, or the shawl, and come back on camping visits to consume the school with envy of her release from civilized restraint; and that is just what we

are trying to avoid. She is bright and promising — in certain ways — if we can hold out to hold on to her." She stopped to utter a despairing little sigh.

"Go on, my dear. You must not falter," was his gentle spur.

"We might have them learn a new psalm — or a chapter in Isaiah," she doubtfully proposed.

"They are pretty well versed in scripture, considering the crude state of their mental powers. As the matter now stands, the Bible is their favorite book, and I should hardly like to use it as a means of discipline, lest we force upon them a distaste for the sacred word."

"They need practise in buttonholes. I might ask Miss Peck to cut three dozen in a strip of cotton cloth, for each one, and they could work them during play hours."

"Miss Peck and they are taxed enough by the regular sewing hours, I think you will admit, and they need the outdoor exercise. What are we, that we should pen these children of the sun and air between four walls, when they are pining for their freedom, simply to enforce a theory that punishment should follow every violation of good order, as relates to Indian children?"

"Then," said Mrs. Averill, "we must join with them in offering the hopeless plea that they are Indians and they are different."

"It would hardly do to let them know it, but we may as well be candid to ourselves and own that they possess the balance of power because of that mysterious difference," he cheerily observed. "We might exhaust a deal of brain force inventing an especial punishment for the destruction of the doughnuts, but we should surprise and grieve them by our scorn of their petition, and doubtless leave with them a lasting memory of a misplaced confidence."

"I trust it all to you," she gave up in relief; "but I rather fear that the impression will prevail that we are too indulgent."

"We would better err upon the mild side. I'll step to the schoolhouse and excuse the girls, and, if you agree with me, we will appoint an Indian picnic to take place Saturday afternoon."

"O Herbert, the wild Indian picnic that the girls have talked about?" she exclaimed, with returning doubt.

"Not necessarily wild, unless with glee. Our girls are making strenuous efforts to walk in the civilized way the whole year through, and I think they are entitled to a gipsy frolic in the Indian summer."

"They wish to invite the boys and have an outdoor feast. Polly's grandmother and aunt arrived to-day, and have pitched their teepe in the brush

below the bluff. No doubt they will remain over Saturday, and will lend their teepe to the festival," considered Mrs. Averill.

"Three Braids will be an appropriate chaperone," he smiled, "since it is to be, in a degree, an old-time Indian frolic. The boys would like to dance by a camp-fire in the evening, inside the grounds, but I must consult Mr. Greely as to that."

"Not the tortuous sun dance, with the mystery tree, even in mere sport," she said.

"By no means, nor the medicine dance; but there are other dances of a harmless order that it might be safe for them to imitate."

As Mr. Averill passed the windows of the little schoolhouse, he observed the girls, with heads upright, sitting in the seats in regular school order. When he stepped inside the door every face was hidden in the arms upon the desks, though he was well aware that twenty pairs of ears were pricked up to the highest stretch awaiting his remarks. Their accurate hearing traced him to the space before the platform, though no eye was lifted from the shy retreat.

"Mrs. Averill and I were glad to receive your petition, girls," he said. "We cheerfully excuse you, and we hope you mean to try very hard to keep good order in the kitchen during the rest of Miss Delaney's absence. We have decided to let

you have an Indian picnic Saturday afternoon, if it does not rain."

A stir of rapture swept the timorous group; then Katy gave a little cough, the signal for a concert recitation they had been rehearsing previous to Mr. Averill's arrival, to express their gratitude for the forgiveness they were sure of gaining.

"Thank — you — Mr. Averill — and — Mrs. Averill. You — are — very — too — kind, — indeed."

It was a smothered vote of thanks, as every face remained secluded, but it was received with cordial interest.

When Mr. Averill had retired, the girls sprang out of ambush and began to eagerly discuss the Indian picnic.

"We can wear our moccasins and beaded stockings," said Louise.

"And do our hair in two very tight braids, and tie beads on the points, and wear shawls on our heads," Amelia added.

"We shall talk Dakota. Not one word of English will we speak," from Nancy. "If the teachers talk to us we cannot understand them, and they cannot understand us."

"We can loo-ok straight at the teachers and talk saucy if we weesh," was the exceptional privilege claimed by Jane.

"But we shall not wish," Katy said. "We shall all feel very good and happy; and Mr. Averill would know it if he heard you, for he talks Dakota."

"We can paint our faces," Jane continued. "Green will be my nose, and there will be a beeg black stripe on my fore-head. One cheek will be blue, and the other will be yellow."

"Kee! you cannot do that," Hester said. "Mrs. Averill only lets us paint our cheeks with red flannel that the color comes out of, when we play Indian."

"If our people could be here, with very lots of wasna," wished Louise. "Three Braids will be here, and Polly's aunt Fast Walker, but of course they cannot feast us on their Indian hash."

"We can make rosebud porridge, and bake beans in a hole in the sand," said Hester; "and I hope the boys can shoot a curlew, to stew with wild turnips."

"That would not be a real Indian picnic," Sarah said. She had been thinking deeply, but she had not spoken till that moment. Sarah was enthroned upon the organ stool, while the rest were squatted on the platform.

"Then what would be?" Katy asked.

"Something else — so very nice indeed," mysteriously. "One girl only can I tell at first."

She looked about to choose a confidant. She fixed her gaze on Inez, who was well established in her favor since the recent understanding. "If you were full Indian I should first tell you, but you are only half Indian, so I cannot. I — shall — cho-o-o-se"— she changed her gaze amid a breathless hush — "Amelia High Hawk."

The elected rose and stepped forth.

Sarah slowly whirled upon the stool five times to curb the general impatience, after which she gently pulled Amelia's ear till she had brought it to the level of her lips.

"It is just three words," was her announcement; then she whispered in Amelia's ear.

"Tokee! so soon after we have been excused!" exclaimed Amelia, straightening up in surprise.

"They said we could have a real Indian picnic. We should not be disobeying, for there is no rule against it," argued Sarah.

"Because they never thought there would need to be a rule," Amelia said.

"Only two rules have we broken for a long time,— tattooing and going in the boat. There was no rule against fasting and telling ghost stories, and firing the gun, and fighting for the doughnuts. If we are not always good, it is because there are not rules enough. Do you not remember that I asked Mrs. Averill how we

should know if we were good, and she said if we obeyed we would be good? If they find this out they can make a rule against it, and never will we disobey it."

Thus did the deluded Indian maiden forthwith sew new seeds of error in the minds of her companions.

"It would be quite nice — I think — but I am not real sure," revolved Amelia.

"If you were a Two Kettle Indian, you would be real sure. I wish I had not told you first," and Sarah cast a scornful look upon Amelia, who had dropped into a chair beside the organ. "You are a White Swan Indian, like Hester. You can tell Indian stories, but you do not think all Indian thoughts. Your are like the half Indians — you and Hester — your thoughts are half white and half Indian. I wish I had first told Jane. She is a Four Bear Indian, but she is much like a Two Kettle. She is a young girl,— you have had three birthdays more than she,— but she is a brave girl. She thinks all Indian thoughts."

Jane swelled with inward pride at this distinguished flattery, but she humbly turned her back upon the group and occupied herself in lacing an expansive government shoe with a misfit gingham string which she had wrested from her hair.

"Never again shall I believe Amelia's ghost

stories," was the last stripe the illuded princess laid on the offender, while the group looked on with bated breath.

The myth-teller felt the ground of her authority giving way and hastened to reply, although with dignity: —

"I think all Indian thoughts, but all Indians do not think the same thoughts. But I shall think the same with you this time, and you need not wish you had first told Jane."

This restored peace and strengthened Sarah's influence, though she felt that she must put a watch and ward upon her plan.

"I shall tell no more of you this time," she said. "Three Braids and Fast Walker will next know it. I shall show them very lots of nice patchwork pieces Miss Peck has given me, and if they say yes, we will have a real Indian picnic."

"Who will next be told?" Jane ceased her struggles with the gingham string to eagerly inquire.

"Mario and Baptiste. Mario is only half Indian, but because he is a boy he thinks all Indian thoughts. Then I shall ask the full Indian girls who will promise to think the same thoughts that I do to hold up the right side."

"When shall you ask the full Indian girls to hold up the right side?" pressed Jane.

"I cannot quite tell — you must ask no more," checked Sarah. "Next the half Indian may hold up the right side. Gertrude Parsons and Rebecca Hoke are only quarter Indians. I am not sure that I shall ask them. They are too near white. About as soon would I ask Lilian and Clark as Gertrude and Rebecca," Sarah added cautiously.

The two middle-sized girls of remote Indian lineage uttered a remonstrant "E-ah!" but were too abashed to press their claim. That they were so near white was a misfortune which they must endure as best they could.

The enticing fence which Sarah built around her plan created the desired effect. There was a general interest to scale it and investigate the mystery inside, with one exception.

"I do not care to know," said Inez. "I am very sad once more. I shall not be happy at the Indian picnic. I shall undo my braid and snarl my hair all up, and throw very lots of dust on my head, and I shall sit inside of Three Braids's teepe and do nothing, and you cannot make me speak. I shall have some sinew in my lap that I could be pulling out to make thread for my beadwork, but I shall not pull one thread. I shall just look at the ground this way."

The splendid dark eyes stared with hopeless rigor at a mouse-hole in a corner of the platform.

The girls respected the relapse of Inez's mourning for Alphonso by making no reply.

Here the door came open and a troop of small girls, headed by the twin, walked in.

"You short girls must stay out," said Sarah. "We have much to say about the Indian picnic that you can't know."

"I shall turn a toad over and make it rain," resolved the twin, with supernatural confidence.

The older girls were seized with consternation.

"Ee! you must not do that," Sarah cried. "You will stop the picnic."

"You shall give me very lots of preety things if I do not make it rain," was Alomina's overture.

No one doubted that the twin could make it rain, were she disposed, and a compromise was hastily effected by the promise of some cherished article of Alomina's choice from all the older girls.

"The little scissors in my work-box from the East are very sharp," said Inez, rallying from her rigor to assist in viewing the alarming situation. "If I give them to her she will hide them in her dress and cut the tablecloth and curtains, and the sheets and bedclothes, and I do not know if Mrs. Averill will not find her out and put her in the think-room. Very fast she spoiled Morning-glory, and she will spoil Sarah's best doll and the others very fast."

When all was settled to her mind, the twin revoked her decision to disturb the elements through the medium of the toad.

"Now of course, if I have the leetle sceessor and so many preety things, I shall not turn a toad over, and of course it will not rain," she said, with sweet complacency.

"Very big pay you will have," said Sarah. "Now you short girls must go out, for I have a thing to tell the long and middle-sized girls."

The children trooped out and closed the door.

"Now all must hold up the right side to promise that you will not say one word, — even to each other," Sarah said. "You can talk about the Indian picnic, but not the real Indian picnic."

Whatever the secret misgivings on the part of Katy and some others, all the hands were raised, Inez joining in the pledge.

The girls were rising to disband when the door burst open and the children rushed back, charged with wondrous news.

"We think it is Ho-ke-la and his pony, and Mario's bronco, and some more boys!" Anna cried. "It loo-k so funny that we do not know if something is the matter."

CHAPTER XII.

MOURNING GIFTS.

THE girls flew out to view the curious procession coming toward the stile. Ho-ke-la slowly walked beside his pony, which was hobbling in a most unusual manner, with a downcast head. Next came Mario, with his bronco harnessed to a drag which hauled a leather trunk. A party of the boys were following, with funereal steps, in Indian file.

"Ho-ke-la's hair has been cut off and he is mourning. He has come to give away his things," was Nancy's quick conclusion.

"Why does he not give them to the boys?" said Katy. "He has never spoken to the girls."

"But he has looked at us," said Nancy; "and of course an Indian boy had always rather give things to the girls."

"Kee! she thinks that Ho-ke-la likes us civilized girls. Of course he does not care one bit for us," disclaimed Katy. "He is only a wild Indian boy. He is not like — Baptiste — and — many others."

"She means Mario!" laughed Nancy.

"She means Mario! She means Mario!" echoed several voices.

"Ee!" cried Katy, and she turned her back, running toward the stile.

Lilian had remained upon the stile after Clark's abrupt departure, and had lost herself in studying her German lesson. She was somewhat startled by the sudden flocking of the girls about her, and looked up to see the train of boys close by.

Nancy had surmised correctly. Ho-ke-la's head was now in civilized trim, to the vast improvement of his personal appearance. Clark had pityingly refrained from carrying out his threat to shear the wild boy closer than a monk, and had accomplished most artistic work, but with disastrous results.

Ho-ke-la's face and attitude expressed deep melancholy for the loss he had sustained. He had shaved his pony's mane and tail, and coated him with gumbo mud, in token of the owner's dire humility. To one fore foot was tied a flat stone, which the pony dragged with difficulty, typifying Ho-ke-la's painful progress thus far in the civilized way. To complete the dispirited picture, the pony's head was drawn down with a strap that ran between his fore legs and was fastened to the saddle-girth.

When the mourning party reached the stile, Mario brought the trunk into the foreground, and at once began his duties as the mourner's spokes-

man. He informed the girls that Ho-ke-la was to give away his personal property, but he did not wish to give it to the boys, as they were all short-haired, so he would bestow it on the girls.

It had been rumored that the wild boy was quite wealthy in a certain line of trappings, and there was a deal of interest among the girls as to who would be the favored ones; but etiquette required that there should be no unbecoming eagerness, nor jealousy in case one failed to be remembered by the mourner.

Mario took off the saddle and a gun and trap attached to it, and laid them on the ground. He then consulted with much dignity a red-covered memorandum book, and began distributing the gifts, the mourner standing by in dolorous silence, tending to discourage all resemblance of elation in the legatees.

"The pony is Lilian Swift Bird's," he announced.

Lilian was much surprised to be preferred above the Indian girls in the bestowal of the highest gift, but she stepped forward and received it, shaking hands with Ho-ke-la to express her thanks. She hastily relieved the pony of the stone and head-strap, with Baptiste's assistance.

"I shall ask Dolphus to wash off the mud, and comb and brush the pony, and I think Mr. Averill

will let me put him in the mission pasture," she remarked. "I shall give him back when Stephen is through mourning."

"Kee! she calls Ho-ke-la Stee-venn!" Jane exclaimed. "Such funny school names do they give the Indian boys."

"It is not the custom to take back a mourning gift," said Sarah. "An Indian is very generous when he is sad. I have seen rich Indians make themselves very poor indeed, so much they gave away when they were sad. An Indian is not ashamed to mourn, but he must have no tears in his eyes unless his child has just died. He cannot have tears if his wife has died.

"That is not fair," said Hester. "They should let him have tears for his wife, if she has been good to him. My father would have tears for my mother, I am quite sure."

"Mine, too," trusted Louise.

"Because they have begun to walk in the white man's road and are thinking white thoughts," censured Sarah, rather absently, while guessing at the contents of the leather trunk.

"I can trade the pony back for something worth but very little," Lilian planned anew.

"He is worth but very leetle," Jane discerned. "He have a hump that is upside down, and he stand croo-ked on his legs."

The pony was sway-backed and weak-kneed. He was not yet aware that he was free to lift his head, and he remained in the dejected attitude in which he came before the stile.

"The saddle is Hester Big Eagle's," went on Mario with the distribution.

Hester also shook hands, resolved to do like Lilian, and return the gift upon some pretext, but she did not venture to oppose the custom by revealing her intention.

"The gun is Sarah Spider's."

Mario relaxed a little from his dignity to slyly smile in holding out the weapon. Doubtless, he had given Ho-ke-la some advice as to its disposal, for the fame of Sarah's marksmanship had reached the other school, as Clark had intimated.

"It is very nice," said Sarah as she stepped forth to receive it and express her thanks. "But again I cannot fire a gun while I am at school."

"It is not loaded," Mario said, with another sly smile.

Sarah placed the gun inside the front yard, which the pupils did not enter, with the laudable resolve to send it in due haste to Mr. Averill by Lilian, for safe keeping. The explosion in the dormitory had impressed a lesson in respect to firearms upon the daring Two Kettle maiden.

Mario now unstrapped the trunk and opened

it amid a flutter of excitement rather felt than heard. The small girls were as still as mice, subdued by the solemnity of the occasion, which the spokesman emphasized by his display of the red memorandum book. The boys displayed no lack of chivalry, however much their souls were racked with secret envy.

"The eagle fan is Katy O'Donnell's," Mario next announced, after looking at the list with fixed attention.

Katy well-nigh murmured with delight as she received the pressed tail of the golden eagle, which was very rare and beautiful. She gave the mourner's hand a grateful shake that must have cheered him inwardly, if he were not the victim of confirmed despair.

"I shall not feel so very sad about keeping this, for Ho-ke-la has no need of it," she said, when she had stepped back to her place. "Only a girl can use a fan like this," and she began forthwith to make good use of it by holding it before her face, and shyly peeping from one side at Mario.

"He could wear it on a war-bonnet, or have it on his totem pole," said Sarah, promptly rectifying her mistake.

"He will be civilized by the school, and never will he wear a war-bonnet, and, of course, he will not have a totem, either," Katy said.

"The lariat is Louise Beaver Skin's," pursued the spokesman, holding up a tether made of rawhide, cut in strips and plaited with great care till it was round and smooth.

Louise was much pleased to receive it.

"We can use it for a jump-rope," she said. "It is so long that many girls can jump together."

"The snow-shoes are Nancy Little Bear's."

"I can walk on very high snow with these, and bring the mail to Mr. Averill, when the snow is so much that he cannot ride a horse," said Nancy.

"You would be afraid of the soldiers if you went to the fort," said Jane; "but you can run away from school on the snow-shoes when a beeg snow-storm there have been, and Meester Averill cannot chase you."

"Tokee!" was the united exclamation of the girls at this audacity.

"The beaver trap is Jane Yellow Horse's."

"I shall catch cats," Jane began to plan, quiescently rejoicing in her legacy. "I shall tan the skeens and sell them at the agency. They will send them to a beeg ceety, and some white people will buy them, for they will think a very nice wild animal lived inside of them. Enough cats are in thees school to get me a red seelk dress and two white shoes, like the way Penelop-ee Two

Crows loo-k when she got married at the church, and I was there."

"Penelope Two Crows was a rich chief's daughter. She was much civilized at Carlisle, and she married a policeman," Hester said, by way of curbing Jane's ambition.

"I could join the church with my feet in the white shoes, and I could march in them the last night when school feenished, and our people are here," pined Jane.

"The beaver teeth are Amelia High Hawk's," Mario continued, holding up a necklace formed of rodent teeth, strung upon a wire like pendant beads.

"It will make me industrious to wear this," said Amelia, falling back into the ranks, quite overwhelmed by her good fortune in acquiring the peculiar ornament supposed to be a talisman. "I can hide it under my collar, and when I have much work to do I shall not get tired and wish I was through; and my work will be very nicely done."

"That is not fair," said Sarah. "If you wear the beaver teeth, you will win the prize every moon for the best work. And Mrs. Averill will think you won it right, for she does not believe in beaver teeth."

"That is not fair," arose the general opinion.

"Then I will not wear it only when we clean house and I am getting very too tired, or when the missionary is here, and very anxious will I be to do such nice work."

This sacrifice of personal interest by Amelia quieted the first outbreak of dissension in relation to the mourning gifts.

The wild boy had indeed been rich in personal property. Besides the articles already named, the leather trunk gave out a store of fancy work, which indicated that Ho-ke-la was the pet of all his feminine relatives. There were beaded wristlets, moccasins, and gloves, a highly ornamented guncase, knife-sheath, match-safe, and tobacco-pouch, with various other things bestowed as parting gifts before he left the Indian camp to enter school.

Mario had so advised that every large and middle-sized girl was remembered in the mourner's will. The last thing from the trunk was a tiny bead bag, which contained an article of small size, but of great importance. Mario held it up with impressive pause.

"The red medicine bean — Inez Cardona."

The Spanish Indian girl could scarce believe that she was the recipient of so valuable a gift.

The red medicine bean was only to be found upon a bush which grew upon the prairie near the Rocky Mountains.

As the Sioux no longer roamed in that direction, the enchanted bean was very rare and highly prized. It was about the size of a small hazelnut, and was supposed to be alive and charged with wondrous virtues. The possessor of this animated vegetable could realize wishes and control fate with high-handed power, if the bean liked the possessor. With its company and good-will one need not lose the way upon the pathless prairie, or go hungry, for the birds and animals contended for the privilege of laying down their lives in honor of the magic hybrid.

"Ee! she have a bug-bean," Jane exclaimed, as Inez took the wonder from the bag and held it on her palm with reverent care. "Now she can weesh for us, and very lots of things can we all do, and it will not be wrong. She can weesh it will be all right to have the real Indian peecnic."

"Shee! you held up the right side, and now you have talked," was Sarah's stern reproof.

"I did not think — oxcuse me," stammered Jane. "Inez can weesh I have not talked," she added, with a dazzled effort to retrieve herself.

"Now I am not sad," said Inez, throwing off all care about Alphonso, since she could control his destiny, as she believed, by means of the enchanted bean. I shall not mourn at the Indian picnic. I shall be very happy and too noisy."

"But the bean may not like you," foreboded Sarah.

"Ee! but it will," fondly trusted Inez.

"Tokee! she say the bug-bean will like her," Jane exclaimed. "Mees Delaney say it is very egg-o-tis-tickle (she groped her way) to praise ourselves."

"That does not sound like Miss Delaney," noted Katy, with a little burst of ill-timed laughter. "We must not try to speak the big words that white people say, though I think it was ego-tis-ti-cal."

Mario closed his much-enjoyed prerogative as the mourner's spokesman with these words: —

"The trunk is Alomina Weasel Toes."

The twin calmly took possession, shaking hands with Ho-ke-la as the older girls had done. Mario shut the trunk and placed it by the fence, and Alomina perched herself contentedly upon it.

"She will want to fill it full of playthings, and much more we shall now have to give her," Sarah ill-advisedly predicted in the hearing of the twin.

"Inez can weesh she will behave, and the bug-bean will make her," trusted Jane, losing sight of Alomina's superhuman standing for the moment.

"Ee! she is the twin," was the fixed fact called to mind by Nancy.

Ho-ke-la now took leave, returning to the school

bereft of all resemblance of a wild boy, inasmuch as he had shed his Indian trappings with his locks, and was well started in the civilized road. In view of all this change, henceforth he must be known to us as Stephen.

The girls informed the boys about the gipsy frolic, profiting by Jane's mistake, and avoiding all allusion to the real Indian picnic.

Sarah had a moment's talk with Mario and Baptiste, requesting them to meet her at the teepe, where they might be told of something interesting after she had talked with Three Braids and Fast Walker. Mario unhitched his bronco from the drag, and the two boys mounted him, riding to the brush where Mario had set his trap.

At the close of Sarah's talk with Three Braids and Fast Walker, she presented the two Indian women with a generous roll of patchwork pieces, and was able to inform Mario and Baptiste, who waited near by, of her plan. They agreed with her that its fulfilment would ensure a real Indian picnic.

When the boys had left, the girls about the stile compared gifts and especially discussed the pony and the charms, after which they went their ways.

Nancy and Amelia took the trunk upstairs. Inez walked alone to wish about Alphonso. Louise repaired with Katy and some others to a

level spot to jump the lariat. Jane went to set her trap behind the barn. Lilian picked up the gun which Sarah had committed to her care, and led the pony to a private yard at one side, followed by a troop of little girls. She tied him to a post and shut the gate, and sent the children off to play, lest they be tempted inside near his heels. Then she took the gun to Mr. Averill.

He was much surprised, on opening the door, to see his gentle pupil armed with the warlike weapon.

"It isn't loaded," she made haste to calm his fears.

"Unloaded guns are often very dangerous," he answered, gravely taking it and offering her a chair. "'The gun was not loaded, but it went off,' is a frequent head-line in the papers for describing serious accidents. However, you are right as to this especial weapon," on examining it.

"It belongs to Sarah," she surprised him still more by explaining. "It's a mourning gift from Stephen. Clark has cut his hair."

"Ah, I understand — the wild boy at the other school. Mr. Greely feared he would have some trouble starting him aright."

The two superintendents had discussed the obstacle to be encountered in cutting the wild boy's hair, and both had felt for Ho-ke-la the natural

compassion of true educators in the Indian work, by whom no superstition of the strange red people is reviled.

Stephen had endured the shearing on the previous afternoon without the least resistance, after which he had appointed Mario to talk with Mr. Greely as to the disposal of his property.

Mr. Greely had admitted Stephen's right to give away his own belongings, knowing that his parents would approve it, but had called him to the office and explained the proper view of the affair. He had reasoned with the wild boy long and patiently, but was unable to convince him that he had no cause to mourn.

It was not the policy to civilize the Indian youths by force, but by persuasion and example, so the superintendent had permitted Stephen to pursue his own course, secretly amused, for all the gravity of the affair, at his decision to bestow his all upon the girls. Fortunately, long-haired boys were growing scarce, thought Mr. Greely, for the day schools at the camps had used the shears heroically, and of the few who came to boarding-school one seldom claimed the privilege of mourning if, indeed, he had a pony or aught else to give away.

Lilian stated all that had transpired at the stile, while Mr. Averill was deep in book-keeping at

his desk, and Mrs. Averill and Miss Peck were busy in the sewing-room.

"Sarah wishes you to please keep the gun till summer; then she wants to use it," Lilian disclosed. "She is going hunting with her brother, and she means to shoot a white deer."

Mr. Averill smiled at Sarah's lofty aim.

"The white deer is the will-o'-the-wisp which every Indian youth pursues," he said.

"You'll be surprised to see the pony," Lilian continued. "He is hollow-backed, and such a sight, without the least bit of mane or tail, and all stuck up with gumbo. Mario says he is a frightful kicker, and thinks he isn't worth a pound of sugar, but I want to take good care of him till I can find some way to trade him back for very little. I thought I'd better take him, though I didn't know if you would like it, for the others — all but Hester — might have thought they ought to keep him. Hester says she shall trade back the saddle, but Katy means to keep the eagle feathers. Mario says they're worth a good pony."

"Stephen will be quite as well off without the feathers," Mr. Averill remarked; "and, indeed, he is well rid of all the Indian trappings. He will also settle down to school work more contentedly without his gun and pony."

"Maybe we had better keep the pony in the

mission pasture till next summer," Lilian reflected. "He may wish to run away, poor boy. I'm so afraid he will be homesick, now that he has lost his hair; and as he lives so far, — about a hundred miles, — he wouldn't like to start on foot. If he could get acquainted with the girls, there'd be less danger, but he doesn't seem to care for them."

"I think he has shown his friendship for the girls in his bestowal of the gifts," replied Mr. Averill. "The wild boy will be rather shy of our civilized girls for some time, but no doubt he will become acquainted in due season and be happy in the school."

Then they went below to see about the pony.

"He is in a sad condition, truly," Mr. Averill said. "I'll ask Dolphus to attend to him at once."

The young man was at the wood-piles chopping fence posts, with an interested eye toward the yard. Mr. Averill brought him thither with a motion of the hand.

Dolphus viewed the pony from all points, chewing gum in meditative silence.

"He's a sorry critter," he observed at length. "Gumbo sticks like a poor repertation that a feller's tryin' to git red of. If 'twas in the heat o' summer, we could tie a wet blanket round him, but 'twould be onsafe to put him in soak this time o' year. Howsomever, I'll begin a course o' treat-

ment; but I shouldn't be afraid to bet a town lot five miles out o' Pierre, that he'll be nippin' grass next summer with a substratum o' gumbo interferin' with his new crop o' hair."

Dolphus had a tender heart for animals, and Lilian knew that her lugubrious gift would be well cared for.

CHAPTER XIII.

GIPSYING.

A VARIEGATED scene was presented on the flats below the bluffs that Indian summer afternoon when the gipsying took place.

The girls and boys portrayed by their apparel, in a realistic manner, the vagaries of the savage taste. The girls had beads in great abundance on their necks, and arms, and hair, and even wound around their ankles. Strings of beads were hung upon their ears, already well adorned with ear-rings. Great was the display of moccasins, with which the pupils of the schools were kept supplied by friends at home. Many of the girls had on skin stockings worked with beads and porcupine quills. Others not possessing Indian stockings wore the woven issue hose, in which gay stripes prevailed. All went bareheaded, basking in the gorgeous sunshine, with a sense of primitive freedom, though they wore bright shawls, beneath which they could hide at pleasure.

The small girls had their dolls and playthings bundled in their shawls upon their backs, and rivaled one another in displaying the numerical

strength of their respective families and their wealth of household goods.

"Twins have I," observed Luella, as she shed her load upon the playground in the brush selected for the little ones, near where the teachers were encamped, with a convenient eye upon the scene. "One twin is Indian, and one is white. Much preetier is my white baby, but much goo-der is my Indian baby, for she do not cry hardly ever. I can hang her up and leave her very long, but I have to tend my white baby very lots. She is so pee-teecular about being too-ken goo-d care of."

Though Dakota was permitted at the Indian picnic, the little ones, from force of habit, spoke the quaint, irregular English they had learned with great rapidity.

The little brown mother of the red and white twins relieved herself by strapping the papoose to a hymn-book, and suspending her upon a plum tree, cuddling the capricious white pet in her arms.

No sooner had she thus arranged her infantine affairs than the twig to which the Indian cradle was attached snapped off, precipitating the papoose face down into a Russian thistle.

"Now of course she cries," excused the little mother as she picked her up. "But I shall pinch her nose and teach her not to," and the Indian

method of impressing self-control upon young children was applied.

Luella held the buckskin nose between her thumb and finger, gazing fixedly into the infant's face.

"When she is black she will cry no more," she said, while watching for the proper stage of suffocation.

The dirt that blackened the papoose's skin assisted the imagination, and ere long the little mother was enabled to relax her rigorous discipline. She hung the cradle in a more secure place, and gave her whole attention to the spoiled child, feeding her with rabbits' noses through a yawning cavity where once had been a pair of rosy lips. The berries promptly reappeared through another cavity beneath the dimpled chin; but the little Indian girl's imagination was as fertile as a little white girl's, and she drew a breath of satisfaction that the infant's hunger was appeased.

"I have much more than twins," exceeded Abby. "I have just as many babies as the puppies were at home — a whole leeter of four babies. One is Indian, and one is white, and the other is Japanese, and the other is a very black indeed negro."

Abby spread her motley row of children, representing four nations, on the grass, and viewed them with a wealthy air. She then began erecting

mimic poles of willow boughs, sticking them into the ground and binding them together at the top with vines. She drew her shawl around them, pinned it at the side and top, and tied the fringe about the bottom to the bits of twigs she stuck into the ground between the poles for pegs, and speedily a tiny red teepe had arisen. She arranged her household goods and family inside, and thus reposed her rolling hearthstone with facility quite natural to an ingrained little nomad. .

The other small gipsies had deposited their bundles and unwrapped their shawls, and now they vied with one another as to who should be the next to have her lodge in order. Teepes sprang up here and there as if by magic, and behold a gay little camp, adding touches of new color to the scene already glowing with the painted foliage on tree, and bush, and vine.

"Katharine and I have leave our play babies in our cupboards, and we do not care for teepes, for we ask Meeses Averill if we can take care of Bertram all the afternoon, and she say yes," gloried ten-year-old Anna over Abby and Luella, who were only eight, and therefore not to be entrusted with the flesh and blood school baby, who had reached the lively age of twenty months.

The two little nurse-maids were attired in hats and jackets, and were minus beads and moccasins.

They were strutting round the picnic grounds with Bertram in his cart.

"We are not wild Indians," continued Anna; "we shall stay ceevilized, for Meeses Averill would not want her baby to be too-ken care of by wild Indians."

When they had walked about the camp, and viewed it with a civilized stare, as if it were a novel sight, they passed along to where a dozen small boys squatted in a semicircle, watching Sammy Yellow Horse's effort to induce his tiny Indian dog, Tipsappi, to perform the difficult trick of jumping through his master's stubby arms.

Tipsappi seemed to have no bent for trickery, but displayed a candid longing for the chunk of boiled beef Harrison Poor Shot had secreted in his pocket at the dinner table, and had now uncovered as a timely lunch. He was forced to climb a stump to shun Tipsappi's close attention, for the little dog had turned his back upon his master, warily refusing to go through the loop, and had attached himself to Harrison's elbow. Not to be eluded, he was scratching at the stump and barking furiously.

"Teepsappi is not preety, and he not neat," said Katharine, as the little nurse-maids halted for a minute. "He have not much tail, and only one side have an eye. His hair steek up all round,

and he have fleas that jump and bite you when you pat him."

"Ee! but he is brave," defended Sammy. "If he did not dare to fight a badger, he would have a long, waggy tail, and the other side would have an eye. If Harreeson have not go up the stump, Teepsappi would be biting him to get the meat. He will bite him when he have come down," Sammy prophesied, with ominous pride.

"Meeses Greely say Teepsappi is a cross dog," Katharine reported. "If she hear him biting Harreeson, she will come and make you lariat him where the cheeldren will not be."

"But Harreeson is peegish, to be eating all the meat," said Anna. "He should be polite, and give Teepsappi some."

"I cannot, for thees day I am a wild Indian," regretted Harrison. "Very fast I shall have to cram — thees way."

He laid his school manners on the shelf and bolted an enormous mouthful; but he overplayed his part, and strangled in the act. In his spasm to regain his breath he dropped the remnant of the meat, and so Tipsappi had a share.

"That is goo-d," rejoiced Anna. "Now you are ponished for you eempoliteness. You are not a wild Indian, you are a ceevilized peeg," was her discrimination.

Three Braids' and Fast Walker's teepe was to be the central point of interest for the older girls and boys. Three Braids was attired as usual on dress occasions, in the cowboy hat and army overcoat. She had added several buttons to the coat since Phœbe's last inspection.

The girls had made haste with their after-dinner work, and had arrived in camp before the boys, who had not been so deft in finishing theirs. The kettles had been hung on poles, laid across forked sticks securely planted in the ground, and the girls were laying wood beneath them for the fires, when Mario appeared upon his bronco, brilliantly arrayed.

He wore Clark's leggings and a pair of showy moccasins, to which the indispensable porcupine had contributed many quills. He had trimmed his blue shirt with a yellow fringe of tissue paper, evolved by Katy and his sister. In the vicinity of his heart he wore a valentine, somewhat defaced but still quite dressy. On his raven head he wore a crownless cap, or head-band, of red flannel with a row of blue-jay feathers standing up around the top.

He had a train-cloth, or a width of Scotch plaid, fastened to his waist and floating in the rear. This distinguishing mark of a young Indian dandy was designed to drag upon the ground behind when Mario walked. A beaded belt which Lilian had



MARIO APPEARED UPON HIS BRONCO BRILLIANTLY ARRAYED.

lent to Katy, and she had transferred to Mario, added much to his appearance.

At his side he flaunted a tobacco-pouch, elaborately beaded. But instead of killikinick (dried ozier bark and sumach), the tobacco-pouch contained a small portion of a pink silk handkerchief of Japanese design, from Katy's mission-box. The larger portion floated from the bag.

Thus attired, the Spanish Indian youth was well prepared to be the cynosure of all eyes, and the envy of the other boys, who had been more sparing of their finery for the afternoon, as the dances were to take place in the evening, and they wished to be in novel trim for them.

"Ee! but he is beautiful," said Nancy in Dakota, as the gorgeous youth rode by. "None so fine as Mario in all this Indian country."

"Mario is the belle; the preetiest belle of all!" cried Jane, in wonder-stricken English. "Never have I seen an Indian belle that loo-k so very—"

She could find no word with which to round the exclamation.

Jane had heard a marvelous description of the belle of Pierre, and she seized upon the new word with the usûal avidity of a beginner in a foreign language.

"You are speaking English," reprimanded Sarah, "and you are the wildest Indian of us all."

Jane had shown her craving for unique effects in planning her attire. She had linked into her ear-rings several rows of quill chains reaching to her waist, and, not content with these adornments, she had saddled on two strings of buttons, with a little pewter fork attached to one, and a little tin spoon to the other, burdening her hapless ears in the extreme. She had tucked her hair, which she had parted and combed forward in the back, into a pair of little buckskin bags behind her ears. The bags were fastened to a hideous hair-band of none other than a black and yellow snake-skin. They were different in size and decoration. One was "porcupined," the other beaded. Jane had oft been told that hair-bags were the rage when grandmother was a tribal beauty, hence she had adopted them on this occasion.

To improve her privilege, to barbarize herself in full, she had exchanged her school frock for an Indian straight gown from her trunk. This curious garment was of dingy calico, and made precisely like a monstrous bag with both ends open and a draw string in the top. It had a pair of short, slim bags for sleeves, inserted into round holes at the sides. As Jane possessed no beaded belt, she had the long, loose garment girted with a leather strap.

One moccasin had been consumed in the attempt to odorate the air about the ghost and cause it to

dissolve, but the scorched mate had been patched across the sole, and Jane was wearing it upon one foot. She wore an arctic overshoe upon the other. As a badge of industry, she bore upon her back a keg which she had filled with water for the kettles.

In toiling toward the teepe, she had walked with the traditional stoop of an overburdened squaw bowed down with drudgery.

"I shall speak no more English. Ee-ah! I am growing much too civilized," bewailed Jane, straightening her tongue.

Mario alighted and lariated his bronco, seemingly unconscious of the admiration of the girls. Then he walked about at an enchanting distance, showing his caparison to advantage.

"The train-cloth is very hideous; it is Katy's old dress, that was only fit for scrub rags, and we could not make it nice," said Inez, striving to conceal her pride in Mario's appearance. "All the other boys will look much nicer. Mario is not handsome, and he is not brave. He would not dare to go upon the war-path. He would faint if he should try to take a scalp," she added, as in duty bound to keep a full amount of sisterly disparagement upon the vain youth.

"He would be much braver if he were full Indian," Sarah said. "Ho-ke-la and Baptiste

would dare to take a scalp, and Peter Poor Shot and Lorenzo Goggle Eye."

"There is Ho-ke-la now, and he has not one feather," said Amelia, as a party of the boys walked down the bluffs. "Very lately he was wild, and now he looks so civilized."

Truly Stephen was the only civilized-looking one in all the company. He was gravely decorous in the unadorned blue uniform of the school, while the other boys disported feathers in abundance, likewise moccasins, and leggings, and all sorts of trappings.

The recent wild boy, having drained the cup of misery to the dregs, had rallied from his mourning aspect to a wondrous extent. He walked with head erect, and kept pace with the other boys. If he craved a portion of their finery, he gave no evidence.

"He will not even play wild Indian," said Hester.

"Kee! it is not play. It is a real Indian picnic," Sarah said. "Do you forget the mystery feast?" in lower tone. "Ho-ke-la will eat that, and all the boys. They held up the right hand for Mario. It is cooking fast."

She pointed to the tent, wherein a kettle boiled above a fire below the smoke-hole. Three Braids was the only one who watched this kettle. None

but she could even lay a stick upon the fire, or go inside the teepe for a specified time.

"I am not happy when I think of it," said Katy. "I wish we were only to have the rosebud porridge, and the curlew, and wild turnips, and the parched corn and baked beans."

"Tokee! that will not do. You promised, with the right hand up, that you would think all Indian thoughts," warned Sarah.

"I shall try to keep my promise," Katy said, "but it will be very hard."

Hester thought the same, but did not speak.

"Nothing now is hard to me, for I have the red medicine bean," said Inez, with her hand upon her pocket, where she felt the charm.

"The civilized road and the Indian road are very far apart. Of course it is hard to walk in both roads at once," was the self-evident truth which Sarah aimed at Katy.

All this time the water carrier had held the keg upon her back.

"Ee! the keg is leaking down Jane's back — so very lots indeed!" cried Katy, blundering into the forbidden English as her eyes alighted on the streams that trickled from the keg and deluged Jane's unconscious back.

Jane removed the keg and found it well-nigh empty.

"Ugh!" she wildly grunted, setting it on end and viewing it in stoical disgust.

"It smells two kinds," detected Katy. "One is kerosene, and the other is molasses, but the sweet kind is not so much as the kerosene." Katy's tilted nose went up still more. "It is the keg Jane dropped, and broke the lamp on when she went to clean it, and it ran into the stopper-hole, for Inez forgot to stop it when she made the ginger cookies. And they had to throw the keg away."

"What nasty rosebud porridge it would make!" scorned Inez, turning up a dainty nose in company with Katy. "And the curlew and wild turnip stew — who could bear to taste it?"

"We cannot be wild Indians if we are not very nasty," Jane asserted, in defense of her position. "That was why I chose the keg. I did not get the water from the well. I got it from the river. That was very nasty, too, for it was very muddy."

"Ee! you cheated," Katy said. "We thought you were bringing clean water. We shall not be so wild as that."

"Again, you forget the mystery feast," was Sarah's grave reminder. "Three Braids is cooking that in muddy water."

The girls were silent, looking at the teepe, reflecting on the sealed concoction simmering within.

"I shall hold the red medicine bean in my mouth before I taste it," Inez said.

"I shall chew 'wacariga'" (sweet-smelling medicine leaves), said Hester, making bold to speak at length. "I had some in my trunk, and I put them in my pocket."

"You must give me some," said Katy eagerly.

"Me, too," begged Louise.

"That is not the Indian way," was Sarah's oft-repeated charge. "They are like Lilian — all four of them. Ee-ah! they must be white girls that were stolen by the Indians when they were very young. How they hate the Indian way!"

"They do not wish to eat the kerosene," jeered Jane. "And I must keep very far away, for they cannot bear to smell it. I shall hide in the brush, and sit on the keg and bead my moccasin for this foot," holding up the member in the arctic overshoe.

She drew a soaked and grimy piece of skin embroidery from a drenched bag at her side, preparing to seclude herself and further its embellishment.

"She is wet with sweet-water, and when it dries she will stick to the keg," said Inez, laughing Jane to scorn.

"Ee!" teased Katy, "and her Indian dress will stick to her so tight. How queer she will look!"

"She wishes us to be wild Indians," added Hester, "so we must not be polite. We must laugh, and scream, and point our fingers, and make fun of her."

"Yes," joined Louise, "we must all make fun of her. She thought she had the bad-smelling sweetwater in the keg to pour into the kettles, but she has it all down her back. We are very wild. We must laugh very loud."

"I am very wild. And I must pull your hair and scratch you very hard," Jane coincided, with an air of grim defiance. She replaced the beadwork in the bag, and squared herself for action.

She was promptly hemmed in by a flock of laughing, teasing, wild young maids, bent upon the Indian mode of ridiculing a mistake.

Jane clutched at Inez's Indian braids and was about to strip them of their beads, while Katy sought to wreak destruction on the buckskin bags behind Jane's ears. But Mario averted these disasters by his timely interference.

"Tokee! what means this fight?" he queried, separating the entangled girls by seizing Katy's hands, then Jane's, in quick succession, causing them to loose their hold.

"We were acting wild Indian," explained Katy, with a ring of temper in her voice. "Jane thought we were not wild enough."

"We are not wild Indians on the war-path. We have smoked the pipe of peace," was his reproof. "It is well the teepe was between you and the two white eagles. Now they come this way."

The girls caught sight of Mr. Averill and Mr. Greely coming from the teachers' camp. All scampered to the spot where Three Braids and Fast Walker sat upon the ground outside the teepe.

When the two superintendents passed, the wild young maids demurely sat around their chaperone, with eyes intently fixed upon their beadwork snatched from bags and pockets. Jane was peacefully embosomed in their midst.

The boys were likewise settled on the ground, playing Indian games.

"They seem to be enjoying the picnic in a very orderly manner," Mr. Greely said. "I have placed the boys on honor not to bet on the games, and I hope I can depend on them."

"The little wild maids have given us all to understand that they are not expecting white visitors this afternoon, and we will not embarrass them by watching them too closely," Mr. Averill said.

The two deluded superintendents went their way.

Howbeit, as the games proceeded there was a bewildering exchange of feathers as the lightest

possible infringement on the rule of honor. Several blue-jay feathers found their way to Stephen's civilized hat as he was playing draughts with Mario, and some buttons disappeared from Stephen's uniform. Let us hope that Mr. Greely's boys soon reached the civilized state in which the betting of a feather would have weighed upon their conscience.

When the coast was clear, Mario laid aside his wild Indian dignity for Katy's sake, and brought a pail of water from the well beneath the windmill on the flats — holding up his train-cloth in a graceful manner — and the culinary work was pushed on.

By and by a faint perfume of wild roses, from the seed-buds gathered in the brush, issued from the porridge kettle, as the cooks uncovered it to stir in flour and sugar. Katy and Hester made the porridge.

Presently the scent of roses yielded to the stronger odor of the curlew and wild turnips from the neighboring kettle, watched by Inez and Amelia.

Corn was parched by Nancy and Louise, and ground between two stones, and mixed with salted water for the Indian mush.

The beans were baking in a hot pit in the sand, which Fast Walker had prepared soon after dawn.

They required no watching but to keep a slow fire on the sand above them.

In the canvas of the teepe was an eyelet hole, and Sarah, Jane, and others took turns peering through it to inspect, with fascinated gaze, the pot wherein was being brewed the mystic viands, promising a real Indian picnic.

There was an eyelet hole upon the other side, through which the twin, who played with Polly by the tent, was peering every now and then.

On account of Polly's close relationship to the proprietors of the teepe, she had not been banished to the children's playground, and the twin had chosen to remain with her.

CHAPTER XIV.

HIEROGLYPHICS.

LILIAN was taking no part in the Indian picnic, though she had an interest in its success and had lent the girls her Indian ornaments.

Mother Swift Bird and Aunt Losa had been lavish in their gifts of curious handiwork, which she had never used but had preserved as keepsakes. The girls were wearing beaded hair-bands, girdles, woven necklaces and bracelets, work-bags, and the like, that she had taken from her trunk for the occasion.

The fair young alien ventured to intrude upon the wild camp for a transient visit, but was promptly made aware that she was not expected. The camp was stricken speechless, and the girls upraised their fists and sent their fingers flying toward her as the Indian sign of disapproval, the porridge cooks and Inez joining in the sign, although they gave her friendly glances on the sly. There was a grim display of table knives among the boys, and Mario scalped a spot of turf and waved the tuft of grass at her in warning. Even friendly Three Braids scowled at her, and Fast Walker grunted, "Ugh!"

She felt herself surrounded by an air of mystery which she could not fathom, and departed hastily.

She sought the teachers' camp, where she was given cordial welcome and a seat by Mrs. Averill. Here she stayed awhile, then visited the children's camp, and was received with joyful demonstration that atoned for the peculiar conduct of the older gipsies. The little girls were very fond of Lilian, and no mystery feast was brewing in their camp, requiring them to keep the uninitiated at arm's length.

When she had gone the rounds she wandered up the flats, and was now seated on a log, inspecting in a puzzled way a rude sketch she had taken from her pocket. It was Mother Swift Bird's chart, drawn on a piece of coarse brown paper, and preserved with great care in a kind of buckskin envelope, beaded like all other Indian treasures. Aunt Losa had delivered it two days before. She had arrived at noon, in company with another Indian woman and her two small children. They had camped but one night, leaving early in the morning.

Lilian had tried most anxiously to gain some knowledge of her early history from Aunt Losa, but she seemed to know of nothing more than she had told Clark, relating only to the chart.

The log was close below the bluff, upon a straight

line with the mission house. Lilian faced the bluff and every now and then she cast her eyes along its broken surface, searching for some clue by which to read the chart. It was utterly without perspective, and the youngest school child might have drawn a picture as correctly.

While Lilian was thus engaged Clark strolled along behind her, rattling the bushes. She did not look back, and he passed a little to one side and chose a seat upon a rock within her view. He faced the river, gazing at the hills upon the other side. Something of their bleakness seemed to be reflected in his face, which wore a look of deep misanthropy, remarkable in one so young. As Lilian did not glance that way, he changed his seat to one upon the grass in supplicating nearness to her feet. Thereupon, she looked at him abstractedly, half smiled, and went on studying the chart.

"I say, Miss Lilian, which of us is going to speak first?" he asked despairingly.

"I don't know," she answered, with a little laugh that ended in a sigh.

"It isn't likely that you could forgive a fellow," he suggested, pushing back his hat and rumpling his yellow forelock in tragic discontent.

"I wish you'd tell me what it all means," she demurred, with gentle gravity. "There are two

puzzles — Mother Swift Bird's chart and you. I don't know which is worrying me the more."

"I'll be as clear as cut glass — by and by," he said evasively; "that is, if you are friendly. If we keep on scrapping, there'll be little difference to me between this part of South Dakota and the Bad Lands. I've prospected the desert waste from the edge, but haven't had occasion to get lost in its deadly labyrinth — yet."

He placed peculiar stress upon the last word, as if suggesting fearful possibilities.

"Now you're growing more and more reckless," Lilian lamented. "It must be something dreadful that is ailing you. I thought you'd take an interest trying to find the treasure, but you stay away and act so queer. I don't believe you saw Aunt Losa, and she asked about you, and I know she wished to see you, but she didn't like to call on you at school."

"No, she wouldn't do that. She is like the rest of Indian women,— more retiring than a last year's almanac. I heard she was in camp and went to see her in the edge of evening, after you'd been there. Aunt Losa is all right. In fact, she is an aboriginal daisy, pretty to this day, and tidy as a schoolgirl. She and I are fast friends, but I'm mute as a fish whenever I reflect that I'm her nephew." Here he shoved his hat forward to

his eyebrows, with the mien of hiding his diminished head. "It stands to reason that the bride from Washington will frown on me; then, of course, you'll turn me out to graze."

"Oh, dear, you're cowboyish again," said Lilian, in distress. "If Mrs. Frisbie didn't think you were real nice, it wouldn't be because you have an Indian aunt, I'm very sure. It would be that dreadful something in yourself."

Clark passed by her admonition and continued to expose the gloomy tenor of his thoughts.

"Fancy my conflicting emotions if my semi-Indian cousins, Bright Eyes and Good Boy, as Aunt Losa calls them, hadn't been cut off in early life. I'm racked with remorse for not lamenting day and night that they've escaped the sorrows which beset poor Lo — or semi-Lo — in this uncharitable world, but it wouldn't be quite natural for me to pine for them beyond all reason."

"I think you would have cared a great deal for them and tried to help them grow up very civilized. Aunt Losa mourns for them so deeply, and it must be Uncle Seth does, though he never shows his feelings. There is one very beautiful thing about all the Indians, however wild and fierce."

"Do tell!" Clark interrupted, straightening his hat and pricking up his ears.

"They love their children very fondly."

"Grizzly bears and mountain lions are equally beautiful in that respect," he said.

"I wish there'd been a big family of cousin Swift Birds. How I would have loved to do my little best to help civilize them all," yearned Lilian.

"But the flock of Swift Birds wouldn't have been in your immediate family. Indian cousins that were no relation wouldn't grate upon the nerves so hard."

"I don't suppose I have a family," she answered sadly, with her eyes upon the chart. A tear escaped her eyelashes and rolled down her cheek. It smote Clark with a certain measure of remorse.

"I don't know what to call myself for worrying you so much, but don't cry, Lily," he implored. "We'll leave no stone unturned to find the treasure, and I'll do my level best to keep from being cowboyish, and jealous of the bride, and so forth."

This gave Lilian a gleam of hope, and she was able to suppress her tears.

"But I can't agree to be the pattern of perfection till after the missionary has been here," was the new condition which he introduced apace.

"Oh, you want to talk with him? I'm glad of that," she said. "He'll give you such beautiful advice. It makes one feel religious just to talk with him."

"I hadn't planned to talk with him," Clark said, with some embarrassment, "although I may be called to do so; but I'd laid a sort of scheme to be around somewhere within a gunshot of the mission — as Aunt Losa says about the treasure — when he makes his visit."

"I really wish you'd talk with him," she urged; "he'd make it very easy, and you wouldn't need a bit of courage. But if you can't decide to see him in his room, 'twill do you very much good indeed to be at the service. Jane and several other middle-sized girls are to be taken into the church."

"You can depend on me to be at service," he replied. "I wouldn't miss seeing Jane join the church for all the ponies on the range."

"Dear me, that doesn't sound exactly serious," with a shadow of returning doubt. She scanned his face, but he had banished all appearance of untimely mirth. "Of course, Jane and the other Indian girls haven't much light, but it isn't best to hide the very little they have under a bushel."

"No; 'twould be a waste of hemisphere, especially Jane's. I should say her feeble light could very well be hidden under a thimble," Clark responded with exceeding gravity. "I don't suppose the chart will be much help," he took a new turn by observing.

"I'm afraid not," she said. "Do try to help me read it."

He shifted to her side upon the log and they put their wits together.

"There doesn't seem to be the least ear-mark of topography about it," he decided, after looking at the curious diagram until it swam before his eyes.

"I can't tell whether it is flat or up and down," she said. "When we stand it up, it seems as if it might be on the bluff; but when we lay it down, it looks like level ground. What is that queer thing?" She pointed with a pencil to an object in the middle of the picture.

"Possibly a green-necked duck, or else a buffalo cow," was his attempted research.

"Is it flying?"

"That depends. If it is a buffalo cow, probably it isn't on the wing; but if it is a green-necked duck, it may be in the air."

"Perhaps, if we should look straight at it for a long, long time, it might begin to seem more natural," she suggested. "Doesn't it appear as if that long, slim something was a snake?"

Clark slapped his forehead to assist his penetration.

"Pyramids of Egypt! You've interpreted one cipher," he exclaimed. "No doubt 'twas crawling past, and Mother Swift Bird took its photo to help

mark the spot. Now, if we can find the snake and identify it by the picture, we shall be that much ahead."

"Dearie me," laughed Lilian, "we shan't get on one bit if you go to talking nonsense; though I shouldn't wonder if the snake was crawling past, and a bird was flying overhead, and Mother Swift Bird put them on the chart. That's about the way with Indian pictures. Aren't those little black spots stars?"

"If they are, they oust the duck and snake," said he. "She wouldn't see stars and them at the same time."

"To be sure, she couldn't see them after dark. Well, that thing that looks a little like a wheel may be the sun."

"Now you're on a clearer track. And those peculiar decorations on each side are probably sun-dogs. If that's the case, the treasure isn't buried in the ground."

"Why not?" she asked.

"She wouldn't see sun-dogs in warm weather. The mercury is out of sight when they are prowling through the sky, and of course the ground would be frozen so she couldn't dig a hole."

"We're just guessing at everything," despaired Lilian.

"While I think of it," said Clark, "I'll mention

that Aunt Losa gave me this key to the chart, night before last. She said Mother Swift Bird told her that wherever you found the picture of a cedar tree, you would find a part of the treasure in a little wooden box."

"Oh, then it isn't all together. That makes it all the harder — to have to hunt for two places," Lilian sighed. "But I'm glad to know about the cedar tree. Here it is — up near the top of that bunch that may be a little mound, or a pile of stones," pointing to a new place on the chart. The cedar tree was Father Swift Bird's family decoration, because his father fasted and talked with a cedar tree in a dream.

"While I think of it again, I'll mention further that Aunt Losa said the little wooden box was hidden in a place where many Indian things had been," Clark added, looking at the bunch attentively.

"How much you know! Why didn't you tell me at the very first?" she wondered.

"There has been so much to talk about the information could work itself in edgewise. And, besides, I may have waited to make sure you were going to be friendly," teasingly.

"I do believe you know all about, it," with reproachful eagerness. "I shouldn't think you'd try to bother me about this, of all things."

"No, — really, — I've told you every scrap I

know," protested Clark, suddenly becoming serious, and scanning the chart more closely. "Do you think that bunch is the old cairn? Many Indian things have been there."

"Oh! I wonder if it isn't," she exclaimed intently. "But she surely didn't hide the box inside the cairn. If she did, it has been carried off long years ago, for the white people have taken all the relics — Indians never rob a cairn."

"No," said Clark, "it isn't probable she put it in there with the Indian traps, but she may have hidden it near by."

"Well, let's go to hunting right away," said Lilian, starting up impatiently. "I haven't looked about the cairn, for I thought it was no use."

The cairn was in the brush further up the flats, around the bend. It marked the spot on which a Sioux chief had been shot by hostile Indians. His body had been placed upon a burial tree close by. The bones had long since disappeared, and the tree had been cut down.

The cairn was built of rather small, uneven stones, and was several feet high. There was a hollow at the base, within which Indian relics had been placed, in memory of the departed chief. The opening had been sealed with stones, but the relic hunters had displaced them, and the inside was now exposed to view.

"It will be wasting time to look inside," said Lilian, "but let's examine every stone outside and see if we can find out anything. We'll begin up high — where the tree on the chart is."

The chinks between the stones were filled with soil, deposited by the wind, and the cairn was partly overgrown with grass and weeds.

"It won't be easy to get at them all," observed Clark, taking out his knife to scrape away the dry herbage and the dirt, while Lilian brought forth a trowel from a bag upon her arm. "There appear to be a number of inscriptions mostly skeletons of animals and birds," he said, upon investigation, "Probably the Indian gentlemen of leisure camping down here carved their tokens to kill time. Hello! some pale-faced rascal, with a grist of perseverance and a good-tempered knife, has paid a glowing tribute to the old chief's memory: 'The only good Indian is a dead one.' A soldier of experience in Indian campaigns, no doubt."

"That is very impolite and untrue," said Lilian. "Father Swift Bird was a good Indian, and Big Eagle is good, so are many of the girls' and boys' fathers. Yes, indeed, there are very many good Indians."

Lilian went around the cairn and began work on the other side, scraping off the stones and eagerly inspecting them.

They pursued the search for some time, talking back and forth, then working silently.

All at once she spoke in quick tones of suppressed excitement.

"Clark, come here and look!"

He took long steps around the cairn, and viewed the stone she had discovered.

"The very image of the cedar tree, as sure as due bills," he exclaimed. "She's scratched it so 'twill last for ages. We must go behind that stone if we have to blast the cairn."

They dug around the stone until the earth was all removed, and found it to be less solidly inserted than the other stones.

"It has been dug out before," suspected Clark, as he pried it with the trowel.

Lilian helped him with the knife until she broke the blade, then she seized upon a jagged point and worked with bruised and trembling fingers. By degrees they drew it out till they could grasp it firmly, then they pulled it from its place. There was a cavity lower in the wall, where another stone had been removed.

Clark stood back and waited, while he looked at Lilian. She had grown pale with suspense.

"Will you put your hand in?" he inquired, not wishing to encroach upon her sacred privilege.

"I can't — you do it — I am so afraid there's

nothing there," she said, between three fluttering breaths.

He thrust his hand in, groped about a moment, and drew out a little wooden box. He held it out to Lilian, but her hands hung limply at her sides, and she leaned against the cairn for a support.

"Gracious Peter! you aren't going to faint," he said, staring helplessly at her.

"No — you open it," she managed to reply.

So he raised the lid.

Lilian quickly rallied from her faintness to inspect the contents of the box. First, they found a child's collarette of needlework and fine lace insertion and lace edging. It was pinned together with a slender bar of gold, which bore the fond inscription, "Darling," traced in blue enamel. Under these was found a little brown silk stocking and a little brown shoe. There was nothing else, except a bunch of bright baby hair inside the shoe.

"It doesn't tell one thing, except that I am not the least bit Indian," she said in disappointment, yet in joyful relief.

"Yes, it does," said Clark, supremely pleased by the discovery. "It proves beyond a doubt that you are not an ordinary settler's child, though that was plain enough before. You wouldn't have been wearing fine lace and silk stockings in a settler's cabin."

Then he studied for a moment.

"People weren't summering up this way for pleasure in those dangerous days, so you couldn't have belonged to a tourist party coming down the river from the Yellowstone, but I'm immensely sure you were a little traveler of note. What a pity that they hadn't put your name on the pin. But it ought to comfort you to know that you were some one's dainty darling — with a sunset head."

With this poetic burst of sentiment, he took the soft hair from the little shoe again, viewing it with tender interest.

"It is frightfully red," she said. "I'm glad my hair has grown much darker. Mother Swift Bird saved the combings — every hair. She used to give them to her visitors. They prized them very much. You know the Indians think red hair is sacred, and they like to touch it."

"That's the reason Big Eagle and the other Indians are always stroking yours," said Clark. "I've wondered if it didn't bother you, and thought you ought to put a stop to it. Sacred or no sacred, every Indian that comes along shouldn't think he has a right to pat you on the head."

"Oh, I'm used to it. They pat Miss Delaney just the same — her hair is red, you know, — and Alma Parsons. But there's one good thing —

they would never harm a red-headed child they had captured."

"That's why your captor didn't rob you of your jewelry. Otherwise he would have used it to adorn his buckskin shirt. Darling wouldn't have applied to him, but I don't believe he would have minded that."

Lilian took the pin and looked at it with misty eyes.

"How often mother would have called me that, if we hadn't lost each other. Oh, I want her more and more — I want my mother, right now!" she exclaimed, in a beseeching, childlike tone.

"Perhaps you think I don't want mine," Clark brushed away a tear. "I tell you she was good and beautiful. She'd been to college, but it hadn't spoiled her in the least for every-day affairs. She knew just how to make home jolly, and she didn't get discouraged when the money all gave out. Great guns! but I was happy back there when I was a little fellow. After mother died, — when I was twelve, — I began to go down hill in mind and manners, not to speak of principles. Father had to give most of his time to pushing his invention and the infringement lawsuit I've told you of, and I didn't see very much of him. Being in the Indian country hasn't made me any steadier. You've done your level best to keep me straight,

and if it hadn't been for you — but you've heard that times enough." Clark grew darkly silent, with the air of a discouraged reprobate.

"Dear me, how dreadfully you talk. But I don't believe you've been so very reckless, after all. You're just trying to seem like a cowboy." Lilian scanned his clear, handsome face with suspicious trust. "Did you ever smoke cigarettes, and play cards, and bet on horse-races, as I've heard the dreadful cowboys do?"

"I should hope not, after knowing mother twelve years, and you a quarter of that time. But I can't tell what I might do if you went off, and I took to the range. I wouldn't be so beastly selfish as to hope you wouldn't find your parents, or relatives, if you have no parents, or at any rate be sent off to a white girls' school, but imagine how 'twould be with me if you were gone."

"Yes, poor boy, I should be always pitying you, and wondering if you were missing me too fearfully — though that is very too conceited."

Then they laughed together to revive their spirits.

Clark replaced the stone, while Lilian dreamed another moment on her treasure.

"I do wonder how they looked," she said. "I love to think of my father as a tall, strong man, with kind eyes and a gentle smile, and of my mother — oh, I can't begin to tell you!"

Here she lost her voice and put the treasure hastily into the box.

"Isn't it queer that Mother Swift Bird hid the things in two places?" was her next remark. "I'm afraid Aunt Losa doesn't know the least thing about the rest, and we will never find them. If she hadn't given us the key to the chart, we shouldn't have found the box."

CHAPTER XV.

THE MYSTERY FEAST.

POLLY was afflicted with sore eyes, and as the afternoon advanced she curled herself up on the ground and went to sleep, having thrust her head into her little teepe, thinking, like the ostrich, that she was securely protected if that part were hidden.

Alomina, left without a playmate, suddenly bethought herself that bread, and meat, and cookies were to be distributed at the children's camp in due time. She hastily pulled down her teepe, placed her playthings in her shawl, and tied the pack upon her back, preparing to jog onward to secure her portion of the civilized feast with which the little ones must be content.

Before taking leave she stopped a minute at the door of Three Braids' teepe, which was now the scene of much activity within.

The girls, except the cooks, were seated on the ground upon one side, the boys upon the other, where the canvas was rolled up to make room for the overflow.

The food prepared outside was being dealt out

by the cooks very sparingly, that it might go around. Tin cans, tin cups, and pie pans, pail covers, and the like were used for dishes, as befitted the occasion. All, however, had a teaspoon, and the peaceful scalping knives were ready to be put to sterling use.

The mystery feast was left to simmer in the pot above the smouldering brands while Three Braids and Fast Walker were partaking of the lesser articles of food. The air was thick with smoke, supposed to be agreeable to the eyes and nostrils of the young wild Indians.

Alomina placed herself before the open door and looked in.

"Ee! there stands the twin," Hester whispered nervously, while pouring rosebud porridge into Sarah's can. Sarah's seat was next the door.

"But she does not know about the mystery feast. She cannot tell," was Sarah's confident reply.

The whispers reached the twin's ears as she turned away. In walking toward the children's playground she espied the two superintendents, in the midst of Mr. Averill's dogs, which he had loosed from the corral to share the pleasures of the picnic. They had stopped to talk with Hester's father, who had just arrived.

Alomina had no fear of man nor beast, and she

turned aside to join the mixed party, looking like a gipsy elf, with the red pack on her back.

"Amen, Meester Averill. Amen, Meester Greely. Amen, Beeg Eagle," was her churchlike greeting.

"You should say good afternoon, my little girl, not amen," Mr. Averill pleasantly instructed, looking far down at the midge.

"Goo-d afternoon, my leetle girl, not amen," she obediently essayed. "I love you very, Meester Averill and Meester Greely, and I have a thing to tell, but I shall not first tell you, for you do not think all Indian thoughts. I am in bed with Inez and I hear the girls talk, and they think I am asleep. And the girls say Sarah wait a long time and ch-o-o-s-e — Amelia. And she first tell her. I shall wait a long time and ch-o-o-s-e" — her gaze climbed slowly to the mounted red policeman — "Beeg Eagle. And I shall first tell him. I shall take a ride with him, so you cannot hear me tell him."

She explained to Big Eagle in Dakota, and he reached down with an interested "Oogh!" and picked her up by one arm, setting her before him on the saddle. That the red pack might not raise a barrier, he placed her sidewise, carefully embracing her with one arm. She grasped his leather belt with both hands and was firmly fixed, completely to her mind.

"Heap smart twin-child," he remarked, nodding to the two superintendents as he walked his horse away.

"She is a strange child," Mr. Averill observed. "She is regarded by her people as a sprite from twin-land, and she acts her part with marked success."

"She seems extremely quick of understanding for a full Indian child so young as she," rejoined Mr. Greely.

"Abnormally so; she makes herself acquainted with the older girls' affairs and gives some startling reports, whether through deliberate purpose or a mere infantine desire to gain attention, we have not been able to decide."

Mr. Averill stroked the greyhound's head and cast a slightly speculative glance to where the red policeman and the gipsy elf were riding round a small circle some yards distant, in close confab. Then the two superintendents walked toward the children's playground.

Meanwhile the policeman stopped his horse and dropped the twin, then galloped toward the tent, dismounted, and went in.

As Mr. Averill and Mr. Greely sauntered on, their way was suddenly obstructed by the twin, who had dodged in front of them, and was walking backward facing them.

"Now I shall next tell you," she said, when she had brought them to a halt, "a puppy is in the pot, and Sarah say it will taste like leetle sheep; and a ground-hog's heart, and Mario catch it in his trap; and — and — a crow's wing, and Baptiste will shoot the crow. And Peter Poor Shot keel a weasel, and he poot its leever in the meestery feast. And Jane will set her trap to catch cats and she will catch a porcupines, and she have poot its back legs in the meestery feast. Three Braids' puppy it is, and Sarah buy it with some patchwork pieces; and Three Braids coo-k the meestery feast. And Sarah have the meestery stone, and she poot it in the pot. Sarah say it will be a meestery feast if she will the puppy and the meestery stone, but she is glad she can get more things, so it is very too meestery een-deed. And Sarah make the girls hold up right side to say they shall like it; so Katy, and Inez, and Hester, and Louise must eat it, but they do not want to. And Sarah say it is a real Indian peecnic. And I think Beeg Eagle want to eat some puppy, for he ride very fast, and they do not begin to eat it yet. Now, I have tell you a v-e-r-r-y n-i-i-c-e story about a meestery feast, and I shall go and get some bread, and meat, and coo-kies."

Thereupon she skipped away.

The two superintendents gave each other an inquiring look, and kept deliberative silence for a time.

As Big Eagle stepped into the tent a whispered murmur went the rounds: —

"Tokee! the policeman."

Big Eagle, who had stooped his tall form coming through the doorway, straightened up and looked about the closely seated company of girls and boys. He picked his way among them to a clear space in the center of the tent and fixed his eyes upon the pot, still hanging from the pole. Then he motioned Hester to his side, and took her by the arm. He seized on Sarah likewise, while a painful hush prevailed. The color vanished from the two girls' faces, leaving but a scarlet dye spot on their cheeks, supplied by the unstable flannel.

"Point your first fingers at the dog feast," he commanded in Dakota.

The girls obeyed, each thrusting out two trembling fingers.

"Point all your fingers at the dog feast."

Their twenty fingers went out at the bidding.

"Keep them pointed at the dog feast."

He swept his eyes about the company again, taking in the two women with the rest.

"All of you point your fingers at the dog feast."

Unquestioning obedience must be rendered the all-powerful policeman, and four hundred fingers, including Three Braids' bony digits, were directed towards the pot.

"Keep them pointed at the dog feast."

Big Eagle now removed the kettle from the crane and held it at arm's length, turning slowly while he moved his eyes about the circle.

"All say 'Ugh!'"

There was a rather feeble concert recitation of the word expressing Indian disgust.

"Much louder," he commanded sternly.

A vociferous exclamation of disgust was poured out on the dog feast and the mystery giblets.

The policeman then withdrew, and walked away with the forbidding banquet, leading his horse.

"Can we stop pointing?" Sarah humbly asked, with finger still outstretched.

The question was deferred to Hester as the lineal descendant of the man in government blue, with brass buttons.

"I do not know — I think so. There is nothing now to point at," Hester said, and dropped her hands.

"Ee!" cried Nancy, peering from the door. "The policeman is taking it to the river — he will put it in the water."

There was an instant stir by all but Three Braids and Fast Walker, to watch the summary disposal of the mystery feast. The boys who sat

outside were first to seize a lookout, those inside emerging from beneath the rolled-up cloth and hieing round the tent close after them, to join the reconnoiter. The girls, who dared not venture outside, crowded round the narrow doorway, jostling one another in their breathless interest to gain a peep. The two women kept their seats in dignified retirement.

Big Eagle sank the kettle in the river, after which he led his horse a short way up the sand and remounted him.

The girls fell back into their seats in dread of what might happen next. The boys returned with less precipitation, but with readiness that showed their inclination to withdraw from sight and discuss the situation with the girls.

"If Alomina's report can be relied upon, the girls are the leaders in the singular mischief — Sarah Spider in particular," said Mr. Averill, on recovering from his mute surprise. "I fear I must admit that my policy is at fault, and hasten to amend it."

"What policy is not at fault — from first to last — in dealing with the Indians, old and young?" said Mr. Greely, turning on his track impatiently. "Amendments only make matters worse. Rigid discipline, firm but kind requirement, or mild persuasion, fail alike to strike the difficulty at the root

and impress these Indian pupils with a sense of their responsibility. Shall we move at once upon the camp and capture the obnoxious mess of pottage? Is it possible that Big Eagle will uphold our pupils in the mischief?"

"I think not. He appears to know his official duty too well for that. Ah, there he is — upon his way to the river, with the kettle in hand. The twin's remarkable insight seems unfailing."

The two superintendents watched the Indian as he sank the kettle, Mr. Greely with a stern face that bespoke a new line of regulation for his irresponsible boys, Mr. Averill with his wonted steadfast mien. Mr. Greely was the older man by fifteen years, and he had served a long term in the Indian work, but he was not, as yet, the master of his natural impetuosity.

"As Big Eagle has spared us the need of immediate action, we can now take time to plan our tactics," Mr. Averill said, with a rueful smile. "We would better not appear to be in haste. We may hear from the policeman presently. Here is a convenient log. Suppose we seat ourselves."

"You are right," said Mr. Greely, cautioned by the younger man's composure and adjusting himself. "These Indian pupils, to the youngest child, respect deliberation and demand calm treatment."

So they took seats on the log, as if upon the impulse of a leisure moment.

"In view of what appears to have taken place, do you think it would be well to change our plan to extend the entertainment through the evening?" Mr. Averill opened the discussion of the tactics by inquiring.

"It would hardly be advisable to stop the evening's performance now. A white man's broken promise is a serious matter to an Indian youth," reflected Mr. Greely. "Paint and warlike decorations are forbidden, and I have restricted the boys to a few harmless evolutions in the dancing line, among them the eating dance, and a sort of hand-shaking movement which they call a dance. They wished to have the begging dance, and another which required a reckless meddling with firebrands, but I would have none of that. They have arranged a sleight-of-hand exhibit, and Mario thinks his bronco can perform some circus tricks that will surprise the spectators. I know that Indian amusements, of whatever kind, are prohibited in other reservation schools, but I have had a theory that if the pupils could be brought by gradual means to cease to care for them, the cure would be more effectual than through compulsion."

"That has been my view, but perhaps the grad-

ual means is like the 'tapering off' of the inebriate — just enough to keep up the appetite."

Big Eagle now rode slowly up and made a brief speech to the two men, who arose to meet him. Both were somewhat versed in Dakota, and were at no loss to follow him.

"You can make a good Indian of a bad Indian, and you can make a bad Indian of a good Indian. You can make an Indian of a white man, but you can never make a white man of an Indian. The boys and girls are the children of their fathers. They will make good civilized Indians, but not good civilized white people. The two white school-fathers must be kind, but they must be sharp-eyed. They should be like the Anungite, with four eyes to see with, and four ears to hear with. And they should have a policeman in both schools."

With this reserved advice the Indian rode away, to find a grazing spot on which to lariat his horse.



BIG EAGLE NOW RODE SLOWLY UP AND MADE A BRIEF SPEECH
TO THE TWO MEN.

CHAPTER XVI.

AN ANTI-INDIAN ACT.

WHEN the pupils had resumed their seats, the girls about the door kept watch of the policeman riding up the sands.

"Very fast he will go, and talk with Mr. Averill and Mr. Greely," Nancy feared. "The twin has found out and told."

"He will not talk cross about us," Hester said. "My father is a policeman, but he is a friend to the girls and boys."

"I am glad he has drowned the puppy and the other mystery things," said Katy, in immense relief. "It makes me seasick to think of them. I shall talk no more Dakota this day, and never again can Sarah make me hold up the right side to promise a thing that is wrong."

"It is not as it used to be," was Mario's plaint, familiar to the ear. "It used to be that Indian policemen would eat dog, but now they drown it in the water."

"I am glad it is drowned," said Inez. "And I shall speak English, and never again hold up the right side for Sarah."

"I, too," accorded Hester and Louise in one breath.

"I am very 'shamed, and my father is very 'shamed, too," Hester added.

"I am very 'shamed, too," said Louise, "and my father will be very 'shamed. He has not tasted dog since he was a minister."

"My father has not tasted dog since he was a policeman." Hester compared notes with the clergyman's daughter.

"He have drown the beeg soup-pot Sarah borrow from the keetchen," noticed Jane, rebounding into English, like the rest.

"And the mystery stone," observed Amelia.

"It was only a stone that Sarah found on the hills across the river," Katy daringly asserted.

"Tokee! it was a white arrow-head," said Nancy, startled by this heresy. "Sarah found it under a toadstool, and a spider-web was spun all round it for a teepe. Do you not know the spider made the arrow-head, and hid it in his teepe for a mystery stone?"

"I do not think so," Katy still revolted. "My father would not think so either, though my mother would."

Three Braids had not understood the English spoken by the girls and Mario, but she had watched their faces and had read their thoughts to some

extent. She now spoke wisely in the native tongue.

"The Indian's way is not the white man's way, and the policeman's way is not the Indian way. The two white school-fathers know the best way for the Indian girls and boys, and the policeman says it is right. Only the old Indians, who cannot chew tough beef," — she stretched her lips, displaying toothless gums — "can eat the tender dog without disgrace."

"Ee-ah! but the government beef is very tough," lamented Baptiste in Dakota, to accommodate the old woman's understanding. "My grandfather says the Indians should dig up their tomahawks to chop it. He is sure the cows are great-grandmothers."

"For myself, I have a better appetite for beef than dog," admitted Mario. "I think Big Eagle lassoed the right pony when he drowned the beastly stuff."

"Very hard have I tried to keep the girls in the Indian road, but they do not like to walk in it. The teachers say it is wrong, and the policeman says it is wrong, and I shall try no more," said Sarah, shorn of all her majesty. "I shall walk no more in the Indian road myself. I shall not look this night at the dances. I shall turn my back."

"Ee-ah! you will miss a show," said Baptiste. "It will be good for the eyes to see us whirl the

firebrands, and trample out the bonfire with our bare feet, in the fire dance."

"You are not to do that," Katy cried, in great alarm. "Mr. Greely said no. He would punish you. The mystery feast is very too dreadful enough, and Mr. Averill should punish us for that."

"What does an Indian care for punishment?" derided Baptiste. "He only fears the soldiers' guns and the white man's jail. What great things can the teachers do to punish us?"

"Not great," said Mario. "Even the policeman could not do much with us, if we chose to dance the fire dance; at any rate, till we had showed him what we dared to do with fire. But for myself, I do not now care to dance those things we call the Indian dances. I have had enough wild Indian this day. I had rather surprise the white men another way than with the fire dance. Much more music could we make with our civilized band in the schoolhouse, than with the Indian band outdoors."

"Ee-ah! the tom-tom and the gourd rattle are the howling of the wild beasts and the squawking of the wild geese. They are not the banjo, and the flute, and the mouth organ, and the church organ."

"They are very too hideous indeed," assented Nancy. "But when Mario plays the banjo and whistles, it is beautiful. I like it very."

This laudation of the third person's musical ability apparently related to an abstract being, not the vain youth in the carefully adjusted train-cloth and the blue-jay feathers. Mario accepted it without embarrassment, for he was quite used to approval from the girls.

"When he plays and whistles 'Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming,' very beautiful indeed it is," was further meed of praise, in Nancy's soft, abstracted tone.

Silence reigned, while many eyes were turned to Katy in the meditative scrutiny peculiar to these children of the leisure race. It was a soul-trying moment, but Katy bore herself in good taste, and devoted all her thoughts to burnishing a brass button on the back of Three Braids' overcoat with chalk-dust from her pocket.

"The bride, and Lieutenant Frisbie, and some more soldier officers and ladies will be here," said Inez. "Very horrid it would be for them to see you acting like wild Indians. They would not want to laugh. They would wish to see some civilized Indian boys."

"There are mystery tricks," urged Peter Poor Shot. "You should see Lorenzo Goggle Eye. He rolls a white feathers in his hands and makes a white stones of them. And he throws the white stones at me, and they change back to feathers."

"But Peter Poor Shot does much more," observed Lorenzo Goggle Eye. "He puts corn in his mouth and it comes out of one ear, and, look! it is beaver teeth. And he swallows grass, and out of the other ear comes a green snake."

"That is very silly," chided Inez, looking coldly at the jugglers. "Any one can see you have the different kinds in your hands and make believe change them, and a tame green snake is hidden in the head-band. Very beastly it is to be eating grass, and very too hideous to pretend that a snake is crawling out of you. Much nicer it would be for Peter Poor Shot to play the mouth organ, and you to sing tenor in the Glee Club."

"Ee! yes," said Jane. "Peter Poor Shot play the mouth organ so stylish, and Lorenzo Goggle Eye sing tenor very too handsome. I weesh to hear the Glee Club sing the 'Skating Song' and 'Old Black Joe.'"

This unstinted praise of the discomfited juggler's civilized accomplishments restored their self-respect, and the wild Indian exhibit forthwith lost its charms to them. But they felt obliged to disavow all claim to the ability with which they had been credited.

"I cannot play," said Peter. "You would think a cat was wauling in the woodpile."

"I cannot sing," declared Lorenzo. "You would think a steer was bellowing on the range."

"Baptiste can play the flute, and Katy the church organ," said Louise.

"Ask Mario's bronco to play the flute. Much more about a tune he knows than I do," said Baptiste.

"I pinch the wrong keys, and my feet get scared and will not pump," disclaimed Katy.

"Sarah and Louise could sing,

> 'A fair little girl sat under a tree,
> Sewing as long as her eyes could see,'"

proposed Amelia.

"I do not keep up with Louise, and like an owl I screech," protested Sarah.

"My father has a loud sing, but mine is very faint," said Louise. "A sick little sheep could do much better."

"Jane could recite 'The Wreck of the Hesperus,'" said Katy. "No one speaks as loud as Jane."

"But I do not speak well. I call it 'The Wrake of the Hisperass,' and I get deezy and shut my eyes very tight, and that loo-k funny. And I always stop and cough before I say, 'Com' heether, com' heether, my leetle daughter.' And I say, 'On the reef of No man's Woo.' You

would laugh very hard and say, 'Is it not ree-mockable? The wild Four Bear Indian, Jane Yellow Horse, is an ailocutioneest.'"

"You are not now a wild Indian. You are fast growing civilized, and you must not be discouraged," Katy said. "Tokee! there is the bell that calls us from the picnic. Mr. Averill is ringing it too early, so of course he is not pleased about the mystery feast. We must say very quick. We can have the entertainment in the schoolhouse, and get through fast, and have some games in the music-room. You do not have to promise anything, but all who wish that way can hold up the right side."

"Kee! but Lieutenant Freezé-beé will be there," Jane interrupted the proceedings to remind the timid girls; "and some other soldier officers."

"It will be nice to have the soldier officers," Katy said courageously. "Tokee! we are very awkward," Nancy said.

"Only those who are scared and hang their heads are awkward," Katy said. "The boys are not afraid, and they are graceful," was the compliment intended to decoy the cautious youths, who yet debated whether they should hazard an appearance on the public platform.

"For myself, much rather would I chance it with the soldier officers than the soldier ladies," Mario minced the truth to say.

"Tokee! he knows the soldier ladies will admire to watch and hear him wheestle," Jane suspicioned in a whisper to Amelia.

"Again I say all who wish that way can hold up the right side," Katy put the vote again.

The majority, including the deposed daughter of the house of Two Kettles, raised the hand.

"That is good," said Katy, looking round. "Only a few wish to be wild Indians, and they are all middle-sized boys, who have much to learn. The girls can have the wand drill that they had the last night when school finished in the summer, and I wasn't here, nor the soldier officers and ladies, for it rained so hard. Inez will be captain. Hester and Amelia can play a duet on the organ. Big Eagle will be here, and he will be so glad to hear his daughter play music. Nancy can lead the grand march," she hurriedly went on with the arrangements. "Who shall tell Mr. Averill and Mr. Greely that we wish to have the civilized entertainment?"

"Katy and Mario," Hester said.

"Katy and Mario," was the general acclamation.

"I shall be choked in my throat when I talk to Mr. Averill, but I will try," was Katy's brave resolve. "One thing more we ought to tell them. All who hate the mystery feast and are glad they

did not taste it can hold up the right side again, if they want to." She was cautious not to force the ballot.

A popular vote was cast against the puppy and the mystery giblets. Possibly a sense of chivalry for the girls who pulled the wires to pass the anti-Indian act induced a number of the boys to raise the hand, but the outlook was encouraging.

While the hands were in the air, Mr. Greely stopped before the doorway and looked in. The pupils rose in haste, and the superintendent walked away without a word.

"He heard you," Hester said to Katy.

"Then he will know we really mean it," Katy answered.

As the company dispersed, Mario took off his train-cloth, rolled it in a wad and handed it to Inez, who was going from the tent with Katy.

"What young fool was that that looked so silly this day in a train-cloth?" he inquired. "You can now use it for the scrub-rag."

"It did not look so nice as I thought it would," said Inez, "and how very too much in the way it was. It will be much better in the scrub-pail."

"Much nicer you will look in your Sunday clothes this night," said Katy. "Ho-ke-la has looked the best of all this day."

When the girls were dismissed from supper,

Katy was the center of attraction in the play-room. She had passed the ordeal of an interview with Mr. Averill, having left the office at the ringing of the last bell for supper. She was now making her report, surrounded by the whole group of large and middle-sized girls.

"Was he very too sober indeed?" asked Nancy.

"Yes, and first I could not speak one word for the lump in my throat was so hard. Then he asked, 'What do you wish to say, Katy?' and sat very still and looked at me so straight, and a little bit displeased but not cross. And the lump got v-e-r-r-y b-i-i-g! and my throat got v-e-r-r-y s-m-a-a-ll, just like my breath could not squeeze through. Then he spoke so kind, and said — something like this: —

"'Katy, I am very much your friend, and you need not be afraid to tell me what is in your heart.'

"Then a very little breath got past the lump, and I could tell him we were all so sorry about the mystery feast, and our conscience pinched us very too hard. Then he sounded kind of sad — just like something pained him, when he said — I cannot tell it quite right, but it meant this way: —

"'Katy, if I could be surprised at anything, I should be surprised that you would hold up the

right side to promise you would eat dog, because you have been five years at Hampton.'

"And I thought of the kind teachers at Hampton that talked to me so good when I came away, and told me I must try hard to stay civilized, and just like I should cry. But I did not, and got I over being scared, and I told him never again would I hold up the right side to promise anything wrong, and the other girls and Sarah would not. And I told him Sarah wished to walk no more in the Indian road, and she would now let the girls walk in the white road, and she sent him an ap-ology about the puppy and the other mystery things."

"Was he glad to get the ap-ologee?" asked Jane.

"He did not say. He has had so many ap-ologies just like he is tired of them. I said Sarah would prove that she meant to be another kind, and then he frowned his forehead a very little bit, and spoke a little bit too fast, — just like he was kind of mad and could not help it, — and asked how she would prove it. I told him about the entertainment, and said she would sing with Louise,

'A fair little girl sat under a tree,
Sewing as long as her eyes could see,'

and that would be another kind, for she had said that never in the world would she sing before the

soldier officers and ladies, and the girls said she did not sing in the chorus when school closed last summer, and she sings the best of all.

"'Sarah has a very sweet contralto sing,' he said, 'and Mrs. Averill and I have been very sorry to have her keep just like she was dumb, when she could sing such fine music if she would' — not just those words.

"I said the girls would be ashamed to have the boys dance Indian, and Lorenzo Goggle Eye pull the snake out of his ear, and Mario's bronco could not act nice tricks, only cough very hard, and kick Clark's pony that Baptiste was going to borrow, — for Lilian was afraid Ho-ke-la's would get hurt, — and walk crooked like a drunk horse, and that was very impolite. And I said the boys would be ashamed, too, and we all wished so much to have the civilized entertainment, and the girls would try hard to hold up their heads and not act scared. And his eyes looked very happy, and he said: —

"'That pleases me, and it will please Mr. Greely. You may ar-range the program to suit yourselves.'

"Then the bell rang, and he said: —

"'Katy, I am glad you came to talk with me. I hope you will never again be afraid of me.'

"And very fast I told him Sarah said there were not rules enough, and would he please make

a rule against dog. Just like he almost smiled, but he kept very sober and said he would see about it."

"Mr. Averill thinks there are too many rules," said Lilian, who was sitting on the table lacing Polly's shoes. "He wishes we could learn to do without all kinds of rules."

Lilian had heard the mystery feast discussed without reserve by the entire force preparing supper, and had thus received an explanation of the singular repulse which she had met on visiting the camp.

"Tokee!" cried Sarah in amazement. "How could we obey if there were no rules? Just like Mr. Averill will say to Mrs. Averill, 'I am very too tired of having Sarah Spider in this school. We must send her home and let her go back to the shawl.'"

Sarah looked encouragingly downcast for a moment; then she suddenly exclaimed with animation: —

"Ee! there go the teachers from the dining-room. Now all the table-girls come quick."

There was a scurry to dispatch the after-supper work.

Sarah was the manager of the dining-room for the ensuing month, and well did she command her force. She was very capable, and in the main

an energetic worker, though the languid moods peculiar to her race would sometimes seize her unawares. Her chief industrial value lay in her executive ability, enabling her to summon brisk and careful labor from her young assistants.

CHAPTER XVII.

A CIVILIZED ENTERTAINMENT.

"VERY fast we must get the dishes washed," said Katy, who was now a private-dishes girl, with Nancy as a partner. "We beat the boys this noon, and they will try to beat us this night. Very soon they will be over, all dressed up, and the soldier officers and ladies will be here, and just like they will all be waiting in the schoolroom, and we shall be in the dormitory parting our hair crooked, and losing our things, and hooking up our dresses wrong, for we are so excited."

"We cannot dress very fast for the hair ribbons," said Inez. "When we try to tie the bows they turn sideways and stick up and down, and very long it takes to make them right."

"Lilian makes nice bows. She will tie our ribbons," Katy said.

"Lilian is very white-tempered, or she would be cross because we did not speak to her this day in camp," said Inez.

"I think she is not cross one bit; are you, Lilian?" asked Katy anxiously.

Lilian was straining milk at the teachers' cooking

table, thinking of the treasure in the little box, which she had placed in Mrs. Averill's care. The girls were not to know of it at present.

"No," she said, emerging from her reverie; "I thought you were playing wild Indian and wanted to be left all by yourselves. Dearie me, I didn't once imagine you were wild in real earnest. I'm glad Big Eagle got you out of the dreadful mischief just in time."

"I hope the soldier officers and ladies won't find out about the puppy," Inez said. "Never again would the bride wish to speak to us. She is so lovely, I would hate to have her think us very too horrid."

"Much faster must we work," urged Katy, slipping plates into the rinse water with celerity that bewildered Nancy, who was forced to take more time for drying them. "Mrs. Averill will put the short girls to bed straight off. Miss Hartford now has them in the music-room. As fast as they are through the hymns and prayers, so fast should we be through the dishes."

"Tokee! You cannot be!" exclaimed Jane, who was passing through the kitchen with a lighted lamp in each hand. With the change of work, Jane had been appointed assistant lamp girl. "Just now I took a lamp to the organ in the music-room, and the short girls have almost feenished 'Climb-

ing up Zion's Heel,' and very fast would they be saying the Apostles' Creed. Then comes the Lord's Prayer, and that is all."

"Then they will beat us," Katy said. "But we can beat the boys."

"The boys cannot work very fast and wash dishes clean like us and not break them," Inez said. "But they will not care if they are not clean, and they break very lots. Baptiste and Mario are the school dish washers, and Mario said that one day before yesterday he dropped a whole pile of plates and broke them, because Clark tripped him up. And Mario pinned Clark's coat tail to a chair to pay him back, and Clark had set the salad for the teachers' supper in the chair. It was chicken, for the doctor was there from the agency, and they wished to have a very nice supper. And Clark went to whirl round and the chair whirled with him, and, tokee! the chicken salad was all spilled and the dish was broken, and the clean floor that the scrub boys had just finished was all greasy."

There was a peal of irresponsible mirth at this recital of the schoolboy antics and the direful results.

"The boys cut up much worse than we do," Katy plumed the mission when the girls grew quiet. "The Indian boys are a great trial to their

teachers, and very ex-pensive to the government, they break and spoil so much, but I do not know if they are any worse than Clark."

"Much more about boo-ks and manners than the Indian boys can learn Clock know, and he is very handsome, but he is a poor coo-k," observed Jane, lingering to gossip, quite forgetting that the dormitories were unlighted and the little girls were flocking thither in the dark.

"My brother Thomas say that yesterday Clock sweeten the frosting for the teachers' poodding with salt, and the eendustrial teacher did not think to taste it. And the doctor have not gone, and he take a beeg bite the first one, and very fast he get up and steek his head out of the weendow to let the poodding out of his mouth."

There was a shout at the expense of the deluded government physician, who had thought to please his sweet tooth with a liberal taste of Clark's erratic cookery.

"And the eendustrial teacher go to her room and cry till her eyes swell very red, and just like Clock was very sorry, for his conscience pinched him. Now they will not let him work in the keetchen any more. Meester Greely say he shall work outdoors and study longer lessons."

"I am glad of that," said Lilian. "Clark declares he wasn't cut out for a cook, and he hasn't

liked that kind of work. The Indian boys do better kitchen work than he."

A messenger now summoned Jane with the lamps, and the flow of words grew less. Presently the work was finished and the kitchen was deserted. Lilian put out the lights and hastened to her nook to dress, in joyful expectancy of seeing Mrs. Frisbie very soon.

The little company from the fort arrived in good time in a genial humor, ready, like all army people on the frontier, to enjoy whatever might be offered in the way of entertainment.

When the visitors were seated in the broad aisle of the schoolroom, Lilian, through the machinations of the bride, found herself between the young military couple, in a free and easy conversation with the two. She had begged to be omitted from the program, though she had a gift for elocution much admired by all.

The exercises were delayed a little by the non-arrival of the neighboring kitchen force, who had not been so nimble with the after-supper work as the girls expected.

"They didn't think of having it until this afternoon, and they haven't had a bit of practise, only in the exercises Friday afternoon — except the wand drill which they had last summer," Lilian explained. "You will think it very different from

anything you've ever seen, but it will be better than the Indian dances and the jugglery and pony tricks."

"It will be a thousand times more interesting if it's something new," replied the bride. "No doubt it will be quite as interesting as the wild Indian performance, though I should have thought that curiously entertaining. How tastefully the girls are dressed. You wouldn't so amaze me as to say the wonderful class of little brown dress-makers made those pretty frocks themselves?"

The costume of the fair little girl at her side did not escape the bride's artistic eye. Lilian wore a dress of green cloth, trimmed with narrow bands of brown fur on the waist and girdle, and a jaunty green cap with a brown wing at the side.

"No, the dresses we have on to-night came in mission boxes from the East. The dresses that the girls make are from government goods. Our issue dresses aren't so pretty as our mission dresses, but they're nice and strong for every day. Of course the church ladies understand much better how to choose girls' dresses than the government men."

"The girls are fortunate to have the missionary women and the government men striving to outdo one another supplying them with frocks," observed Lieutenant Frisbie.

"How happens it to be a school of both kinds?" Mrs. Frisbie asked.

"Why," said Lilian, "they are ration girls the same as if they weren't in school. I'm a ration girl, too — I have to be" — there was a sudden falter in the bright young voice, and a slight flush tinged the delicate face. "I was adopted by the Indians, — so I am a member of the tribe, and they say I have a right to rations," she pathetically excused herself.

"Of course you have, you dearest child," said Mrs. Frisbie, and she squeezed the little captive's hand in tender sympathy. "We army people all depend upon the government, so there is really little difference between us and the Indians," she added cheerily.

Lilian was much comforted by this assurance from the bride.

"It's a school of three kinds," she went on. "The loveliest of all is the memorial kind. Sometimes parents who have lost their own little girl or boy pay to have a little Indian girl educated at the mission. And if people have something to be very too thankful for, they educate an Indian girl to pay for it. We all belong to some society or private family. The twin is a memorial child. She belongs to a lady in Connecticut, whose little girl got well of the black measles when they'd given her up."

"Oh, go on, dearie, tell us more," said Mrs. Frisbie, giving the lieutenant a delighted look over Lilian's head.

"There's so much to tell I don't know what to choose," said Lilian, as she strove to sift her thoughts. "Each girl has her own mission box once a year, and the ladies send us everything their own girls would love to have. Besides all the pretty clothes, they send us ribbons and embroidered handkerchiefs, and books, and games, and dear little plush and velvet workboxes fitted up with everything we need. The girls are so used to the silver church thimbles that they don't like to use the steel government thimbles. Best of all, the ladies write us lovely letters, and we answer them with many thanks. They wished for our photographs, and a man came all the way from Pierre to take them, but they didn't turn out well, and we didn't send but a few. Some of the girls hung their heads and some looked cross-eyed. A fly lit on the end of Jane Yellow Horse's nose, and she didn't dare to move, so she tried to drive it off with her tongue. But the fly stayed and had its photograph taken."

"I suppose Jane's tongue was also photographed," Lieutenant Frisbie said, in great amusement.

"Yes, and you wouldn't think it would look so big. The photographer said it was magnified.

Jane has the picture in her trunk. She calls it her tongue's photograph, and seems quite proud of it."

"Which is Jane?" asked Mrs. Frisbie, looking at the row of girls upon one side, bravely whispering to keep up their courage.

"The very large middle-sized girl in the plaid dress, with the pink bow on her hair; fourth seat back. She'll recite. Jane was quite wild when she came from the camp school a year ago, but she very soon began to show some signs of growing civilized."

"What were the signs?" Mrs. Frisbie said, with deepening interest.

"Oh, she began to use big words, like the teachers, and she stopped using hair oil, and wished to wash her hair in soda and her face in buttermilk. The girls have all stopped using hair oil, even Sarah. Katy brought the soda and buttermilk idea from the East."

"Why, the poor little brown maids! So they wish to bleach their hair and skin," pitied Mrs. Frisbie.

"Mrs. Averill lets them have the buttermilk, — there's oceans of it, from the cream of eight cows, — and she pets the girls and doesn't laugh at any of their ways, but they would waste the soda very too fearfully. Besides, the government would object."

"So I should imagine," said Lieutenant Frisbie, stroking his moustache to hide a smile.

"Who is the pretty girl in blue, with the tip-tilted nose, in the seat with the Spanish-Indian red bird?" Mrs. Frisbie asked.

"That's Katy — Katy O'Donnell. She is Irish-Indian. She has always been to school at Hampton till this year. Katy's trying very hard to be highly civilized, and she'd love to know you. So would Clark."

"I've heard of Clark, the white boy at the government school. They say his father was a fine man — a genius — and his uncle went through college, and married an Indian woman. Is Clark here to-night?"

"Yes — away back in the southeast corner near the window."

Mrs. Frisbie turned her head in cautious unconcern to view the boy.

"He's lovely; but he looks extremely melancholy. Is he ever known to smile?"

"Oh, yes; he isn't serious enough sometimes. He's sitting very still because he's in a crippled chair that's liable to fall down if he moves. We're rather short of seats."

"Oh, perhaps it is anxiety on that account, instead of melancholy," said the bride, commiserating Clark's precarious situation.

"I think it's a little of both. He's afraid you won't quite like him, and I'll be so fond of you that I won't like him if you don't."

"Dear me, that is a sad improbability all round," replied the young military lady, struggling to be serious.

"He must be a jealous young rascal," said Lieutenant Frisbie, highly entertained by Lilian's ingenious betrayal of Clark's gloomy confidence.

"Well, you see we're cousins — through our Indian relatives. Mother Swift Bird was a sister to Clark's aunt. He thinks I am the only friend he has. Uncle Seth is very strict with him, but I am quite sure he's fonder of him than he seems to be. And Mr. Greely and the teachers must be fond of him, for they are always cheerfully excusing him."

"Oh, then he's one that always needs to be excused. I'm rather sure I shall like him, for I can't abide a perfect boy or man."

The lieutenant raised his eyebrows in ambiguous surprise, and the bride smiled at him.

The belated kitchen force now entered and took seats upon the side allotted to the boys, and the company in the aisle ceased talking and became a quiet and respectful audience.

Miss Hartford and Miss Stuart of the boys' school had helped arrange the program of a

moment's notice, and were near the platform to sustain the shy performers. The impromptu entertainment was practically a fair success, and theoretically beyond reproach. There was fear and trembling, halting and forgetting, on the part of some, especially the girls, who had less courage than the boys, but the friendly audience excused deficiencies and heartily applauded all that bordered on success.

The whistler did not venture on the serenade of Nancy's choice, but gave a really fine rendition of "The Mower's Song," to a passable accompaniment upon his banjo. He responded to an encore, and created much emotion in the aisle by whistling softly, with a dreamy air,

"The dearest spot on earth to me
Is home, sweet home."

"Oh, do you think mamma will come out when the ice breaks up in the spring?" the bride whispered to Lieutenant Frisbie over Lilian's shoulder, with a sharp little pang of homesickness.

For a time her thoughts were with the dear mother who had given her only child to share the young soldier's fortunes on the far frontier. When she could call them back and trust her voice to speak, she said to Lilian, in the little interval between the exercises: —

"It is easy to see that the whistler is a brother to the red-bird. Are there any more of those beautiful Spanish Indians?"

"One — Alphonso. He's a cowboy. You would like to see him dashing round horseback."

Sarah and Louise received due credit for the pretty song in which their voices blended harmoniously. Their quaint Dakota accent made the simple little lay more charming.

"Who is the delicious contralto?" Mrs. Frisbie asked while the band was getting into shape.

"Sarah Spider — a chief's daughter. The other is Louise Beaver Skin. Her father is a clergyman, although he doesn't speak English. Mr. Beaver Skin is very anxious for his children to be highly civilized, and Louise will go to Carlisle next year."

"The majestic contralto should go East, too," observed the lieutenant. "She might develop into something really fine."

"That's Hester Big Eagle's father in the side aisle, in the policeman's uniform," said Lilian. "He's a splendid Indian. Hester is to play the organ with Amelia High Hawk, and her father'll be so proud he'll want to make a speech."

Jane went through the thrilling shipwreck poem in a manner all her own. She shut her eyes and coughed, as usual, but she deserved a prize, inas-

much as she, of all the girls, had courage to recite. While the Indian pupils sang with clearness and expression, none could speak or read with ease in public.

The wand drill was an interesting feature of the evening. Inez drilled her troop with grace and ease, since she did not have to face the audience, and the girl performers bravely fought their shyness and came off victorious to a degree.

The short exercises were concluded early, and the pupils were to play games for an hour or so in the house.

"The Indian problem seems well settled in respect to these two schools," Mrs. Major Lile remarked to Mr. Greely, when the older people had repaired to the parlor, having left the pupils to their games across the hall. "I should say it would be hardly possible for them to lapse into a slight degree of barbarism after all this training."

"Much remains to be accomplished," Mr. Greely answered; "but the prospect seems remarkably encouraging — just now."

"Mr. Greely adds a frank proviso," Major Lile observed. "We mustn't ask these Indian educators to tell secrets out of school."

Mr. Averill was sitting near by, and the two superintendents smiled at each other with their eyes.

Lilian intercepted Clark at one side of the

schoolhouse as he was about to mount his pony and escape.

"Oh, you mustn't go now," she said; "we're going to play games in the house, and I want to introduce you to the bride. She thinks it isn't at all probable that she won't like you."

"The Dutch she does! How happened she to say that?" Clark inquired in alarm. "You haven't been talking it over, have you?"

"Why, I told her you thought she wouldn't quite like you, and that I wouldn't if she didn't, and you thought me all the friend you had — and a little something else."

"Great Cæsar!" he exclaimed, in vexed surprise. "Did Lieutenant Frisbie hear you?"

"Yes; why not?" she asked, in startled tones.

"The best reason in the world. You've made me out a simple sonny, and yourself a little goose."

"O Clark, what is a simple sonny?" in dismay. "I hope I haven't spoken as I shouldn't, to the bride and the lieutenant, of all people. Why am I a little goose?"

"Just because you are. No use trying to explain," despaired he.

"Oh, I don't know what you mean. Please tell me what a simple sonny is," she anxiously persisted.

"Well, if you must know," he said, with an

afflicted laugh, "a simple sonny is a little chap in curls, who writes on his slate at school: —

"'The rose is red,
The violet's blue,'

and holds it up for the little girl across to read. He rubs it out if he sees the teacher coming."

"Why, of course the rose is red and the violet's blue, though some are different. What makes him rub it out if he sees the teacher coming?"

"He's afraid she'll read it, goosie," with another laugh. "You aren't well versed in nursery rhymes, I see."

"I don't begin to understand you," puzzled Lilian. "Isn't there some more?"

"Yes; that's only half," he said, obscurely.

"I don't see why you wish to tease me, when I want so very much to know why I have made you out a simple sonny, like the little boy in curls," she sighed.

"There are different versions to the poem," he was melted to explain. "One refers to the pink, and one to sugar. Both of those apply; but the special version I shall quote this evening is this: —

"'The rose is red,
The violet's blue,
Will you like me
If I'll like you?'"

"Oh," said Lilian, joining in the laugh. Then she mused a little. "May I ask the bride about the other two?"

"Gemini, no!" in new alarm. "I'll have to pin my lips together with a crowbar if the bride must have a full report of me," was his remonstrance. "It's embarrassing to feel that I am rattling nonsense to the bride — and so, of course, to the lieutenant — every time I speak to you. I must say, Lily, for a girl that's studying German and the English classics, you're the worst little piece of unsophisticated innocence I ever met. You're neither white nor Indian. I don't know how to size you up."

He gave his pony's rein a bothered jerk.

"Oh, I don't suppose I am. What am I then? Of course I can't be like a white girl, when I've never known one. If there'd ever been a girl of my age at the fort, I might have watched her and found out a little. If I've ever heard the long word, I don't remember. Is there anything very too wrong about — unsophisticated — innocence?"

He saw her sweet lips tremble in the starlight.

"Decidedly not," with a softer laugh. "Never mind," he said, more gently; "don't worry over it. A schoolhouse full of those sophisticated girls back there can't equal you. And I don't care what the bride and the lieutenant think of me, if

I can manage to stand in with you — but don't tell them that."

"Of course not. They would wonder why you didn't care to stand in with them. That means to stand well, doesn't it? But we must hurry in. They're all gone long ago.

Clark tied his pony and went in with Lilian to be introduced to the bride. The lieutenant he had met before.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PLAYING STAGE-COACH.

THE young military couple had joined Miss Hartford and Miss Stuart of the boys' school, who were with the pupils in the music-room, and Mrs. Frisbie was conducting a new game, called stage-coach.

"Our stage-coach is about to start on a journey through the mountains in Arkansas, carrying a load of invalids to a health resort where there are thirty medical springs, any one of which is said to cure all kinds of ailments," she announced.

She then named the silent players, who had but to rise and whirl when their parts were called. Most of the pupils had consented to become silent players, and were seated on chairs and benches formed into a hollow square.

One became the stage-coach as a whole, others, different portions of the vehicle. The six mules were designated in a way to tax the memory and attention. They were called the off wheel mule, the nigh middle mule, the off leader, and the opposite. Still more confusing were the animals' legs, ears, and tails, namely: — the front right

leg of the off middle mule, the left hind leg of the nigh wheel mule, the off leader's right ear, and so on.

When the silent players had been named, the talking players were assigned parts.

Mario, Inez, and Katy were inspired with courage by the conquering bride to undertake the part of talking players, having been assured that they would have to talk but very little.

There was a lean man, hoping to gain flesh by drinking the medicinal waters of the springs; a fat woman, anxious to reduce her weight; a boarding-house keeper, changing her place of business on account of asthma; an overtaxed young society man, the victim of nervous prostration; two school girls, seeking health together, one afflicted with a lack of appetite, the other sleeplessness; a deaf man, deprived of his hearing by a shock of lightning; and the driver, Jack.

The talking players took their seats with the narrator inside the hollow square, and she began the game.

"When the train stopped at the little station at the end of the railroad, the invalids alighted from the car and all rushed for the stage — dear me, why doesn't the stage jump up and whirl round?" Hester responded to the prompter, who continued "trying to get the best seat."

The seat remembered to revolve, and the other silent players fixed their whole attention on the game with kindling interest. It may be said, however, in the start, and the silent players thus disposed of in a measure, that their love of stories and their untrained power to turn their thoughts two ways at once made them better listeners than actors.

"The deaf man and, very strange to say, the fat woman climbed in first and seized the same seat," proceeded the narrator. "The fat woman said to the deaf man" — Miss Stuart took up the narration: —

"Sir, you will easily see, without an explanation, that I need a whole seat to myself. As it is difficult for me to move except in moments of intense excitement like that of the late scramble, will you oblige me by taking another seat?"

"The deaf man did not answer, and the fat woman nudged him with her elbow and repeated her request. The deaf man looked at her and saw that she was speaking. He watched her lips with much anxiety, but shook his head despairingly and said,"—

Mario grandly rose to the occasion, curled his hands behind his ears, and thus expressed himself: —

"Much louder you must speak. The Thunder

Bird flashed lightning from his eyes at me and clapped his wings too near my head, and now the two sides cannot hear."

The narrator gave the deaf man a delighted smile at this poetic explanation of his sad infirmity and continued: —

"This delay cut off the deaf man's chance of vacating in favor of the fat woman. Lack-of-appetite and Sleeplessness secured the next best seat. Asthma settled into the remaining seat and placed a bird cage, an enormous bandbox, and two satchels by her side. The lean man entered next, and after looking timidly at Asthma and her property remarked," Miss Hartford went on: —

"Very sorry to discommode you, madam; but as I am simply an emaciated hair devoid of fluid, there is ample space for me between the bird cage and the bandbox, if you will allow me."

"Asthma obligingly made answer" —

Lilian managed to give tongue as follows: —

"Certainly; just help yourself to all the room there is. I am very careful of the bird cage, but you can squeeze the bandbox all you like, or hold it in your lap. You can't mash what is inside of it. It's only full of — cold biscuit."

"The invalids were much astonished at the contents of the bandbox," pursued the narrator. "Nervous Prostration, who had followed close upon the

lean man's heels, and was welcome to the crowded space by Lack-of-appetite, owing to a box of bonbons bulging from his pocket, said, with the facility for asking questions natural to health seekers in a stage," —

Clark boldly threw himself into the gap: —

"My gracious, madam, may I take the liberty to ask what you expect to do with all those cold biscuit?

"Why? replied Asthma. The boarders couldn't eat them all, and I brought them to begin another boarding-house with.

"There was a smothered groan from all except the deaf man, whose infirmity prevented him from hearing of the weighty cargo in the bandbox. Here the driver came to close the stage door, saying," —

The lieutenant dashed in at random: —

"Don't be surprised, ladies an' gentlemen, ter see me padlock the door: it's accordin' ter the regerlations of the line."

"The passengers were surprised, however, and, as Jack turned the key in the padlock, the lean man expostulated through a small opening supposed to be a window," —

"Look here, driver, that can't be allowed. We can't stand it to be locked in this way. Why, how are we going to get out?"

'Jack answered":—

"That's jest what's the matter. Yer ain't goin' ter git out, ef I know myself. Stiddy mules is skercer than reliable lawyers, an' thar's been too many nervous invaleeds killed by jumpin' out in runaways in this mountainyous medical country. The stage line passed a law ter hold the drivers responsible fer all remains picked up along the road, an' the drivers went out on a strike. They arbitrated, an' agreed ter lock 'em all in, an' only hold the drivers responsible fer remains inside the stage."

"Great was the alarm, and the fat woman cried":

"Mercy on us! we'll be run away with and killed. Let me out! Let me out!"

"Nervous Prostration joined his protest with the lean man's and the fat woman's":—

"Gwacious Peter, dwiver! whoever heard of such outwageous doings? Why, we're simply wats penned up in a cage. What if the mules wun away and the stage tips bottom side up?"

"The driver, who had been instructed to be patient with the invalids entrusted to his care, and to leave no means untried to calm their fears, regardless of the time consumed, reasoned soothingly":—

"It's jest as safe upside down as right side up. Perhaps ye ain't noticed that it's padded inside, as a special pertection agin hard knocks, and it's

covered with sheet iron outside, painted red an' yaller. It's built that way fer two reasons — fust, to stan' the racket of a runaway, an' secondly, ter be a garrison in case o' road agents, that are thick as blackbirds in the mountings. They're attracted by the invaleeds that come with pockets full o'cash. The stage is extry sure fer hevin' a blind door on tother side that thar ain't no need o' lockin'. The baggage is all in an iron pocket on the back, locked up tight.

"Here the passengers except the deaf man, who was happily unconscious of the peril, Lack-of-appetite and Sleeplessness, who were long since speechless with fright, exclaimed in panic-stricken tones."

"Nervous Prostration": —

"Jessie James! The younger bwothers! Gweat guns, what a stwain upon a man with nervous pwoostwation. My head! my bwain! my thown of weason!"

"Asthma": —

"Oh! who are Jessie James and his younger brothers? What did they do? And what will the agents do to the road? Please tell me quick, driver?"

"Fat woman": —

"Robbers! help! help! I shall faint and fall over."

"Lean man": —

"Pray don't, madam, I implore you! It would be impossible to pick you up. Driver, driver, can we bring no arguments to bear upon you that will cause you to unlock the stage and leave us free to regulate our own movements?"

"Nervous Prostration again": —

"This is monstwous, outwageous, indescwibable. Why, dwiver, if the wobbers fire upon us, we are simply blades of gwass mown down by the scythe. Why don't you leave us fwee to dodge behind the twees?"

"Jack's patience was enduring, and he continued the parley": —

"The blades o' grass wouldn't make much headway dodgin' behind the trees with the road agents' shootin' irons pinted at 'em. Jest pull down the iron shetters on both sides, an' hasp 'em tight, an' you'll be safe agin the scythe. They're fixed ter let in plenty o' fresh air an' keep out bullets. I'll put on the whip an' start the mules into a dead run."

"How fond the whip and mules must be of stories," the narrator smiled, looking round at the silent players, who were so absorbed in the thrilling situation of the passengers that one and all forgot to act. Thus gently spurred, the whip and six mules sprang upon their feet and whirled.

"The lean man could not give up the struggle, and he made this further protest":—

"What if you are riddled in the back with bullets, driver, while you're putting on the whip?"

"'Well,' said Jack,"—

"The mules know the way, an' they'll take ye ter the springs all right, in good quick time, ef their legs don't git tangled in the lines"—the mules were mostly on the alert, and four of them revolved this time—"or too many of 'em don't git shot. One or two dead mules won't stop the rest ef they're scairt bad enough. But ef ev'ry critter falls a martyr ter the cause, an' the driver jines the great majority, it won't affect the int'rests of the passengers. The line hes looked out fer that too keerfully. The road agents can't rifle the dead driver's pocket and git the wherewith ter onlock the garrison, fer I'm in duty bound ter leave the key at this yer hotel. Thar's a duplicate at 'tother end o' the line."

"At this announcement as to the disposal of the key, the fat woman shrieked in agony. Asthma fell across the bird cage in a swoon, and Lack-of-appetite and Sleeplessness embraced each other, weeping frantically. The deaf man, however, was serenely dozing at the farthest limit of the seat, where he had retreated to oblige the fat woman. The driver was about to turn away, but his gentle heart was

stirred with pity for the anguished passengers, and he remained a moment longer to assure them"—

"There ain't the least danger in the univarse, my sufferin' friends. The road agents might pepper away on this yer cast-iron armor tell doomsday, an' ye wouldn't even smell the powder."

"Here Nervous Prostration suggested a possibility that added new horror to the situation."

Clark held back for half an instant, searching for a new horror, then exclaimed: —

"But, dwiver, don't you know those confounded woad agents can build a camp fire under the garwison and sit down and smoke their pipes, and we are simply potatoes woasted in an oven?"

"The strain upon Jack's patience was excessive, and he cast a glance of mild upbraiding through the porthole and replied"—

"See here, my delikit young friend, ye don't look like a man with the tremons, but ye must be sufferin' from brain disorder o' some kind to be construin' the passengers inter simple rats, an' blades o' grass, an' baked pertaters. The newmown hay sounds purty, but it ain't the fact o' the matter."

"Jack then looked at his Waterbury watch and observed":—

"Twenty minutes past startin' time. The line charges twenty-five cents fer every five minutes

spent in givin' infermation on the new padlock departure. One dollar extry fare fer all except the gentleman asleep in the corner, who hain't hed the benefit of the infermation. The fainted woman on the bird cage got her money's wuth before she toppled over."

"Jack gave the key to the landlord, who had been attracted to the spot by the fat woman's shriek, and mounted to the driver's seat. The two strong men who risked their lives for big pay holding in the leaders, let go,"— the narrator went on rapidly, — "the driver cracked the whip about the off leader's right ear, the nigh leader switched his tail, the off middle mule kicked up his left hind leg, the nigh wheel mule pricked up his ears and switched his tail and kicked up his heels, the wheels flew round on the hubs, and away the stage went at frightful speed."

Many of the silent players were unable to collect their wits, but some revolved.

"Meanwhile the passengers were in a state of mind that can better be imagined than described. Asthma was aroused from her swoon by the jolting of the stage, and the deaf man awoke with a start to look inquiringly about and ask":—

"Is it not very too fast indeed that we are going? Does some one know if the mules are of the kind that will run away? Is it that the pas-

sengers are not ple-ased at a thing of some strange kind? I cannot quite tell if their faces are all scared, or very too mad, or sick."

"The stage was filled with wonder at the deaf man's blissful ignorance, as none but the fat woman knew of his infirmity, and Nervous Prostration exclaimed": —

"Chwistopher Columbus, my inquisitive fwend! You are simply a gwound-hog that has hibernated thwough an earthquake, and come out in the spwing to learn the news."

"The passengers made up their minds that what could not be cured must be endured, and as nothing caused them fresh alarm, they grew resigned to their lot, and sought to divert their minds by asking one another curious questions that each felt in duty bound to answer for the general entertainment of the pent-up party. Nervous Prostration turned to his two companions, and observing that they were extremely pretty girls" —

"Tokee!" was the amused whisper from the hollow square.

"He instantly began to take a lively interest in their affairs. Lack-of-appetite received the first attention, and they talked as follows: —

"Nervous Prostration": —

"If I may be so impertinent, young lady, are

you going to the spwings to westore your health by dwinking the curwative waters, or is this simply a pleasure twip — in which the pleasure doesn't show up to good advantage?"

"Lack-of-appetite": —

The narrator smiled at Katy, who was panic-stricken that her time had come at last. She summoned all her bravery, and found voice to answer:—

"It's because I cannot eat very big, only when there is a thing I like."

"Nervous Prostration": —

"Vewy sewious ailment. A sound appetite doesn't hesitate to devour what it doesn't like for the sake of appeasing hunger; for example, the bill of fare in the bandbox. May I ask what kind of food you like? I should suppose angel food would go to the wight spot."

Happily for Lack-of-appetite's feeble self command, she did not see the compliment, but innocently faltered when induced by the narrator: —

"I do not care for angel food. Lilian tried to make some, but only very flat it rose in the oven, and it stuck to our fingers and tongues when she gave it to us, for the teachers could not eat it."

Lack-of-appetite glanced appealingly at the narrator to see if she might cease her efforts, but received a tenderly encouraging refusal, so she wavered on: —

"Very many times a day and night could I eat dried currant pie, but the government will not issue dried currants, and — and they do not come in the mission boxes."

The narrator gave the little shy maid an approving look, and granted her a breathing spell.

"Nervous Prostration": —

"Ah, curwent ewents! Is there nothing else within your reach to tempt your slender appetite?"

"Lack-of-appetite, with her eyes upon the bon-bon box": —

"As many times as I could eat dried currant pie, I could eat candy — and the kind I like best is in a pretty white box, with a nice little ribbon tied in a bow on top."

"Nervous Prostration was delighted to have found some means of bribing the attractive little beggar's slender appetite, and he at once passed the candy. He now inquired of Sleeplessness": —

"If I may be so bold, are you a combined curwent and candy fiend? Ah, pardon me, I should say suffewer, like your fwiend?"

"'No,' replied Sleeplessness" —

Inez caught her breath, unable to give out a sound.

"But with that simple little word she was obliged to stop," filled in the narrator, "as she had a monstrous chocolate fish upon her tongue, which

checked her powers of speech. She smoothed out a dimple in one cheek by stowing the fish away beneath it, and so relieved her tongue that she was able to go on" —

The narrator smiled cheeringly at Inez and she tottered forth with this reply: —

"No; I eat very big all kinds of things, but at night I cannot sleep. There was a ghost walk, very too hideous indeed, and I am very 'fraid it will get into the dormitory and pull my mouth and eyes crooked, so I stay awake."

The narrator raised her eyebrows in amusement at this singular cause of wakefulness, and called on Nervous Prostration to discuss the subject. He did not respond, and after waiting a sufficient time she thus explained his silence: —

"Nervous Prostration was so filled with sympathy for the little sufferer from a tortured fancy, that he found himself unable to renew the conversation. To relieve his sensitive nature of its weight of pity, he addressed his next remark across the space to Asthma."

Here Clark pulled himself together with a violent effort.

"May I ask, madam, if you have undertaken this perwilous journey to twy the westowative pwoperties of the owiginal Fountain of Youth, discovered by Ponce De Leon, which the land agents

have unearthed at the health wesort to which we are flying with the speed of a cannon ball?"

"Asthma did not resent this pointed allusion to the crow's feet at the corners of her eyes, but answered":—

Lilian demurely met the emergency thus:—

"Oh, yes, of course I shall try to get young again, but first I shall have to try to get boarders."

"Nervous Prostration looked at the bandbox and preserved a noncommittal silence for a time. When he spoke, it was to this effect":—

"No use to bathe in the Fountain of Youth with a howling mob of boarders on your hands. They'll bweak new furwows in your forehead with a double-gang plow."

"In view of the cargo in the bandbox, no one offered to engage board of Asthma. After all the fear and trembling of the passengers, the stage arrived safely at the springs, and the passengers shook hands for joy with Jack when he had unlocked the door and said":—

"It's the padlock that has fetched ye safe an' sound. The road agents know it ain't a bit o' use ter fool with a padlocked stage, an' the mules understand the matter jest as well as the road agents, an' know they ain't agoin' ter have the fun o' killin' any more invaleeds. Ye can thank the

padlock that ye hain't been run away with an' robbed fer all that's out."

Before the military party left the mission, Lilian drew Mrs. Frisbie to an alcove in the teachers' hall to tell her of her treasure. Mrs. Averill had put the things into a side drawer of a little cabinet in the alcove, and had given Lilian the key.

"Why, the dear little relics," Mrs. Frisbie said, examining the things with tender interest. "What a sweet little bertha," holding up the collarette, "such dainty lace and work. What a comfort they will be to you."

"Yes," said Lilian; "I'm glad I found them, though they don't prove anything except that I am not an Indian."

"Why, you funny little captive! Did you think you were an Indian?" exclaimed the bride, in great amusement.

"Mr. Averill made me sure I wasn't, but I couldn't prove it till now. Clark thinks they prove that I was not a settler's child, but I'm not sure of that."

"Well, at any rate, you weren't a little foreign emigrant in wooden shoes," laughed Mrs. Frisbie. "And 'darling' is straight English."

She took the pin and looked at it more closely. Then a dreamy spell came over her.

"I'm trying to think where I have seen a pin

resembling this," she said. "Strange what fancies one will have. I seem to see myself a very naughty little girl, coveting the blue pin that my baby cousin wears, to pin the collar on my doll. I rob her of it, and refuse to give it up, and nurse is forced to stand me in the corner. Uncle Leverett comes into the nursery in his uniform, and takes me on one knee and baby on the other. He holds me but a minute, then he kisses me and puts me down and clasps baby very tightly in his arms. 'Good-by, darling, papa's going 'way off,' he says. He kisses baby, hurries to the door, comes back and hugs and kisses her again and again. Then he drops her quickly and goes out. Pretty soon mamma comes and gets little cousin, saying sadly, 'Aunt Ethel needs her baby.' There, the memory has slipped away, and it seems as if I've been imagining a mournful little story."

"Oh," said Lilian, seizing Mrs. Frisbie's hands, "mayn't I hear more about little cousin and Aunt Ethel when there's time?"

"Yes; if I can take you home with me to-night, I'll tell you more, and you may see their pictures."

"I would dearly love to go," yearned Lilian, "but I'd better not till Miss Delaney's back. You know I help oversee the kitchen."

"To be sure; I quite forgot you were a member of the teachers' force. We'll have to wait till you

are care free. Now, darling, lock the things up quickly. We must go below."

"Oh, you aren't going to call me darling, are you?" Lilian murmured, with a rapturous little gasp.

"Of course I am; you are a darling," answered the delightful bride.

CHAPTER XIX.

LILIAN'S PURSUIT.

THE missionary had arrived that noon upon his long-expected visit.

Great decorum, seasoned by a cheerful hum of industry, had reignèd throughout the afternoon. Now the after-supper work was finished, and the bell had called the small girls to their early service in the music-room.

"Of course the short girls will sing their new songs for the meessionary," Jane remarked to Katy, as she came into the back hall from the kitchen, with Nancy, Inez, and Louise. "Meeses Averill say the long and meedle-sized girls could go in with her, and so they have. But I had to take the lamps upstairs, so I got left, and too scared I am to go in alone. My new eessue shoes cry very too loud, and the meessionary would hear them and every one would loo-k at me. I do not know if I should dare to go with Leelian or Mees Delaney."

The industrial teacher had returned in cheerful spirits, having left her mother in a fair way to complete recovery, and Lilian was now free from any share in managing the kitchen. This relieved

her greatly, for the cake and pies and puddings must needs be of a successful order during the missionary's visit.

"We four cannot go," said Katy. "Mrs. Averill asked the large dish girls to take the blankets from the clothes-line. Do you know where Lilian is? We wish she would go with us. She is brave in the dark."

"Just now I left her in the short girls' dormitory watering Polly, who cannot sing, with her sore eyes, so she go to bed and is thirsty. Very fast will Leelian be down to see the meessionary hear the cheeldren sing. Ee! now they have begun, and I shall not go in. I shall help you get the blankets."

Miss Delaney locked the kitchen door, and passed into the music-room, and the five girls ensconced themselves upon the pupils' stairs, peeping through the baluster into the music-room to feast their eyes upon the missionary, while awaiting Lilian's coming.

"Ee! his hair is very white and shiny," noted Katy. "Do you not think it is so nice and pretty?"

"Yes, and very much I like his smile," said Inez. "I always do not think I shall get cross again when I see the missionary smile."

"And his voice is very k-i-i-n-d," said Nancy,

in a soft, admiring drawl. "Will you not like to hear him say 'Good night, dear girls,' before we march from the large and middle-sized prayers?"

"But best I like his sing," observed Louise. "My father sings much louder, but he sings a different kind. The missionary has a white sing, and my father has an Indian sing."

"I like to see him walk on his feet," said Jane. "He do not toe in like my father, and he wear nice shoes that do not cry like the eessue goo-ds. Mees Delaney say he walk with very upright deegnity. I ask my brother Thomas what that mean, and he ask Clock, and Clock say it may mean shoulder braces. Thomas ask him what that mean, and he say it is a thing that stays under his coat and pinches his back if he get croo-ked."

Lilian now came downstairs and readily consented to forego the songs and escort the girls to the clothes-yard. They passed outdoors and around the back yard to the other side.

The clear Northern night was radiant with starlight, and a new moon glimmered in the west. The passing loneliness of the untenanted range had crept up to the mission doors, giving to familiar objects an appearance of remote and silent mystery. A white owl, startled from a leafless cottonwood, whizzed low upon the wing and disappeared as if dissolved in space. The vagrant

cats were skulking to and fro, and one escaped with flying leap from out the wood-cart near the house. From the hilltop came the barking of a coyote, doubtless prowling by the graves. The timid girls kept close to Lilian, shying at the pump and warily examining the water barrel from afar.

The lines were some rods from the house, the outside of the clothes-yard bordering on the bluff. The blankets from the storeroom had been left to air throughout the day, as the last feature of the house-cleaning process. They were quickly taken down and folded, and the girls started for the house with them.

Suddenly they heard a whistling, of the frightful hollow kind which they had heard before and vividly remembered. With a throe of dread they looked behind, and saw the fiery vision of a previous acquaintance gliding up the yard.

"The 'wa-na-gi'!" Nancy gasped.

"Ee-ah! the fire-ghost!" Jane exclaimed.

The shape pursued them and they fled in wildest terror — all but Lilian. She ran a little way, and then was nerved to turn and face the fright.

It stopped as suddenly as she and ceased its whistling.

A fierce resolve to try to solve the mystery rushed over Lilian, and she dropped the blankets on the ground and started to pursue the shape. It

whirled and ran toward the bluff, with Lilian close after it in winged speed.

The little girls were in the midst of the inspiring chorus,—

> "Onward, Christian soldiers,
> Marching as to war,"

when the blanket gatherers rushed into the play-room wild-eyed, blanched, and quivering. They shut the door behind them with a panic-stricken bang, and braced themselves against it, while the audience in the music-room looked out in startled wonder at the strange disturbance.

"Ee-ah! it is pooshing at the door," cried Jane convulsively.

This gave the final touch to the alarm that robbed the blanket gatherers of their seven senses. They were conscious only of a wild desire to escape the ghost which crowded on their heels, as they imagined, and they fled still further, even to the music-room, Jane leading the stampede. A blind faith in the missionary's power to afford protection from the horror prompted her to seize upon a sheltered spot between that dignitary and the superintendent, where she sank down on the floor, and heaped upon her head the blankets she had held fast in her arms. The other four girls, who had dropped their blankets on the play-room floor,

sank weakly on a bench, and hid their faces in their hands.

The piping voices of the children on the platform ceased to cheer the Christian soldiers on their march to victory, and matters came to a decided standstill.

Mr. Averill arose in great surprise. A stern look swept across his face, and he bent above the cowering girl and made a quick move as if to wrench the blankets from her head. Then he drew himself erect and quietly requested Jane to rise and uncover her head.

She obeyed in trembling haste. The startled missionary, the astonished teacher, and the breathless girls and children saw an ashen face emerging from the blankets.

Mr. Averill perceived that something very serious had occurred.

"Miss Hartford, you may carry on the exercises, if you please," he said; "the girls in the room will remember that no whispering can be allowed. The five girls who have just come in may go with Mrs. Averill and me."

The frightened girls were taken to the sitting-room and questioned as to the affair. Katy thus explained: —

"The yellow fire-ghost got after us in the clothes-yard, and Lilian chased it very fast indeed. I

looked back to see if it was catching us, and I think she was very close to it, and just like it fell down, though I could not quite see, it was so far and my eyes were so scared." Katy stopped and shuddered. "Ee! I do not know if it did not drag her off. Shall you dare to run very fast and see, Mr. Averill?" she implored.

Mr. Averill hastened from the house and vainly searched in all directions.

Meanwhile Lilian had come in the nearest door and passed upstairs into the little room adjoining Miss Hartford's, which was now her own. She threw herself upon the bed, burying her face between the pillows. Mrs. Averill found her while the little girls were being put to bed by Miss Delaney, and Miss Hartford kept the large and middle-sized girls in the music-room.

"Why, Lilian, Mr. Averill has been looking for you out of doors," she said. "The girls report that there was something frightful in the yard. They think it was the same object that was seen some weeks ago. Katy says you followed it. Will you come with me and tell us about it?"

Lilian only shrank deeper in the pillows and was strangely silent. Mrs. Averill was much concerned, but she insisted gently.

"I think you must, dear. This appears to be a very serious matter that requires strict attention."

Lilian arose and went with Mrs. Averill to the parlor, where the missionary sat with Mr. Averill, discussing the phenomenon which had so upset the order of the school. They were much disquieted by the fragile whiteness of the young girl's face, and the strained expression of her soft, appealing eyes. The missionary drew her to a seat close by his chair.

"I hear this little girl has been the heroine of the evening, daring to pursue the troublesome object which the Indian girls believed to be a ghost," he said.

Lilian made no answer.

"Did you catch it, Lilian?" asked Mr. Averill.

Still she did not speak.

He waited in a seriously expectant manner, then he asked again:—

"Did you catch the object which you followed? Katy thinks that you were close upon it."

She maintained her silence, and the missionary, seeing she was suffering intensely, took her hand and held it in a soothing clasp. He felt the small soft hand grow tense in his.

"I cannot tell you," she replied at length, in a low voice.

"Then perhaps you didn't catch it," Mr. Averill said. "Were you so bewildered that you didn't know?"

She drew a still deeper breath and answered, "No, Mr. Averill."

He scanned her white face anxiously, then pressed another question.

"What are we to think, then, Lilian? That you could tell, but you do not choose?"

She shook with agitation, but she met the kind, grave eyes with miserable determination.

"Yes, Mr. Averill," she replied.

The superintendent and his wife were greatly troubled by this strange behavior in their favorite pupil, and the missionary, who had watched her growth from childhood, and had always known her as a sweet and gentle little maiden, was as much perplexed as they.

"My child," he urged, "it is your duty to respect the wish of Mr. Averill, and tell him all you know of this affair. You understand, without doubt, that the welfare of the school requires that it should be explained, but that you may comprehend the case more fully I will tell you that a most unfortunate report has gone among the superstitious parents that a specter, much more frightful than the ordinary ghost-walk of the Indian's imagination, haunts the mission. They suppose the lock of hair which has been given you to keep is causing it, and I am told that some have said they should withdraw their children from the school if it appeared again."

Lilian gave a sudden moan, and drew her hand from his to press her handkerchief to her face.

"Oh, I am so very, very sorry, but indeed, indeed, I cannot tell," she faltered, bursting into tears.

Mrs. Averill looked at Mr. Averill beseechingly in Lilian's behalf.

"Well, Lilian, we will not urge the matter any more to-night," he said. "When you have rested and recovered from the shock, I hope you will feel inclined to speak more freely."

Mrs. Averill went with Lilian to her room. She tucked her into bed and kissed her good night, saying: —

"Go to sleep, dear, right away. I shall be in on tiptoe through the night to see if you are resting well."

Lilian clung about her neck a moment, then she dropped her arms and turned her face into the pillow.

"I am at a loss to understand the child," the missionary said, when he and Mr. Averill were left alone.

"I can conjecture but one reason for her silence," Mr. Averill said, "and I am loth to think that possible."

His face grew stern as he reflected.

It was now the middle of the evening, but Mr.

Averill got out his horse and rode to the boys' school. He returned with no solution of the mystery.

Lilian did not leave her room next morning, and Miss Hartford sat in Mrs. Averill's place at breakfast. She was plied with questions after prayers as to Lilian's and Mrs. Averill's absence, and she told the girls that Lilian was unable to appear, and Mrs. Averill was with her.

Jane had rallied from her shock and was about her work as usual. Besides her duties as assistant lamp girl, she attended to the teachers' hall, and when her work upstairs was finished and she took her scrub-pail to the laundry, she reported to a knot of girls as follows: —

"I smell through the keyhole when I scrub the floor by Leelian's door, and it was seek medicine; ver-r-y str-o-o-ng! And I think it was a bottle of pneumonia."

"Kee! you mean ammonia," Katy said. "That is fainting medicine."

"Yes," said Jane. "Then Meeses Averill came out ver-r-y sti-i-ll, and Mees Hartford walk in on her to-o-es; and Meeses Averill tell me to wash very soft and not bump the pail on the floor. And Meester Averill meet Meeses Averill by the stair, and he asks very queek, 'How is Leelian now, Margaret?' and she say, 'She have had another

spell, but she is now asleep.' And he loo-k very sad and say, 'I hope Dolphus will find the surgeon at the fort, and he will not deelay coming.' And she say, 'I hope so. I fear it is the brain, Herbert.' And he say, 'It may be the heart.' Then I hear very loud screaming, and I do not know if it was Leelian, and her brain or her heart was so pained, or Bertram, and Julia Four Bear was scrubbing his face too hard, for it was daubed with syrup. And the meessionary meet Meester Averill in the hall, and he say, 'I trust the leetle girl is better,' and Meester Averill say, 'We cannot quite tell, but she is now asleep. It was a very hard shock.' They all talk very low, and think I do not hear, but I have very sharp ears."

"Lilian was more shocked than we because she chased the ghost," said Katy.

"I wonder if she told Mr. Averill if she caught it," Inez said.

"No; she would not tell," disclosed Jane. "Julia Four Bear say she go to the parlor last night for Meeses Averill, for Bertram want her, and she stop at the door, for she was very too 'fraid to go in. And she hear the meessionary talk very kind and try to make Leelian tell. But she say, 'I am very, very sorry, but eendeed, eendeed I cannot tell.' And she cry very hard. And Julia do not know if they ponished Leelian for deesobeying

the meessionary, for Bertram scream very loud, and she go back and let him tear a picture boo-k and he stop crying."

"Of course they did not punish her," said Katy. "They would not make her sit in the think-room at night, and she would go to bed, anyhow. There are only those two punishments."

"Julia hear the meessionary say our people will come and get us, for the ghost is so bad, concluded Jane.

"Very sorry I shall be to leave school," said Nancy; "but so many times if we are shocked we shall lose the mind that is in cur brains, like Lilian, and there will be a school of very crazy girls."

"Just like I am losing mine now," worried Inez. "I combed and braided the twin's hair two times this morning, and she did not tell me, for she likes to have her head scratched. Then I asked her if her hair had been combed, and she said it had very lots."

"If they should burn the ghost-lock in Lilian's trunk, perhaps the ghost would walk no more," was Katy's daring supposition.

"Tokee! you must not burn a wa-na-gi," Nancy cried.

The twin had stood by, listening with all her startled ears.

Jane's report, which grew by circulation, with

the other full particulars, was carried to the boys' school by Mario, who had been sent by Mr. Greely to the mission for a box of school chalk, and had talked with Katy and his sister. He informed Clark of the situation on alighting from his bronco in the wood-yard.

"Lilian would not tell the missionary if she caught the ghost, and the girls do not know if Mr. Averill punished her, but they say she is now too sick to sit in the think-room. It is the shock that is ailing her, and they say she lies without her senses," he depicted, as he passed on with the chalk.

Clark's nerves were of the strongest, but he gripped the handle of his axe and leaned unsteadily upon it, while the woodpile seemed to be revolving.

Then he dropped the axe and sought an interview with Mr. Greely.

CHAPTER XX.

CLARK'S ORDEAL.

AN extremely rigorous expression grew upon the superintendent as he listened to a statement which Clark made. When he had finished, Mr. Greely said: —

"It may afford you some slight insight to your true character to know that Mr. Averill and I suspected you, perforce, and I intended to begin an effort at detective work to-day. We knew that no one of the Indian boys would have the cunning or the wish to perpetrate so dastardly an act."

He spoke emphatically and sternly, grasping Clark's deploring eyes with his chastising gaze.

"No doubt you reveled in the thought that you were playing on the nerves of timid, superstitious girls, and one not superstitious, but more frail in physical fiber than the Indian girls."

Clark shrank from this allusion to the little fair girl who had suffered from his folly.

"I repeat," said Mr. Greely, "that the Indian boys would not be guilty of so base an act. It takes a white boy to excel and thoroughly enjoy himself in playing cruel jokes."

"Not many white boys would have done it," Clark rejoined, in vindication of his race. "The white boys that would like a thing of this kind are training for the penitentiary," he scored himself.

"You grace the ranks extremely well," said Mr. Greely, with sarcastic eyes upon the handsome stricken face. "What caused you to admit your guilt? The fear that you would surely be detected?" he inquired harshly.

"No; the thought that I may have killed Lilian brought me to my senses. Mario says she is very ill from the shock."

Clark well-nigh lost his voice.

"Ah, then you have succeeded quite beyond your calculations," Mr. Greely said, completely mastered by his pain and anger. He was much inclined to seize the perpetrator of the cruel joke and whip him soundly.

"I suppose I may go to the mission and explain at once," Clark said, when he had braced himself to speak again.

"You may, most certainly, with me as a companion, lest you escape and the affair be not explained to the satisfaction of the Indian parents who have entrusted their children to our care. You will remain here till I am ready. I will have Mario saddle your pony."

The irate superintendent stepped out, and turned

the key upon the practical joker. Clark accepted the situation as his due, and did not chafe at his imprisonment.

An interview took place in Mr. Averill's office in the presence of the missionary. Mr. Averill saw from Mr. Greely's manner that the young reprobate had been severely dealt with, and he added no upbraidings; but a plan was formed by which to thoroughly convince the two schools that the specter was a flesh and blood reality, and also discipline the offender.

Clark submitted in a duly contrite manner, and accepted with a grateful spirit the benevolent counsel of the missionary, who incidentally impressed a lesson on the irate superintendent by his charitable mien.

As Clark was taking leave, he said to Mr. Averill, with a sudden falter: —

"May I ask about Lilian? Mario told me she was very ill — unconscious."

"Not so bad as that," said Mr. Averill kindly, for the boy's distress appealed to him. "She has lost herself a little several times from fainting spells, but she appears much better, and the surgeon thinks we have no cause for serious alarm. Mrs. Averill sat by her last night, and the teachers calmed the girls by staying near the dormitories. There was little rest all round," he added very gravely.

Meanwhile, Miss Peck had put the twin to bed for swimming in a tub of water and then rolling in the dirt, thereby rendering herself unfit to take part in the schoolroom exercises which the missionary was to hear that morning.

When the twin was left alone, her mind recurred to Jane's report, and the conversation that had followed it, and thus she chattered to herself:—

"Leelian is very too seek, and I love her very. The wa-na-gi make her seek. Very, very goo-d was the great grandmawther, so of course her ghost is very, very bad. If they will burn the wa-na-gi, Katy say the ghost will walk no more. I shall burn the wa-na-gi. It is upstair in Leelian's krunk. Inez's key will unlock Leelian's krunk, for she lend it to her once next year when Leelian lost her key. Inez's key will be steeking out of her krunk. I shall get Inez's key and unlock Leelian's krunk."

The twin crept out of bed and pattered to the closet where the key was in the lock. She took it and went through the middle and south dormitories to the attic stairs. She climbed them fearlessly, and groped her way into the long, dim attic. She had visited the place before with Lilian and Inez, and she knew the trunk. When she came upon it she unlocked it and ransacked the contents, lighting on the ghost-bag she had heard the girls de-

scribe. Her eyes were now accustomed to the dusk, and she was able to inspect the bag with care. To make sure that she had the sacred relic, she opened Lilian's plush workbox and took out a little pair of scissors, cut the bag, and found the hair, then she locked the trunk and pattered down-stairs.

There had been a fire in the middle dormitory stove, and Alomina took the poker and threw back the door, and laid the ghost-bag on the brands. She sniffed the odor of the burning hair exultantly.

"Now I shall go and tell Meester Averill and the meessionary."

She invaded the office just in time, for Mr. Averill and the missionary were about to leave it for the schoolroom. She was taken on the missionary's knee and given due attention.

"Of course I am in bed when it is very daylight, for I play in the water and I roll in the dirt, so I spoil the preety new dress I wear thees morning, for the meessionary is here. So I must be ponished. And I go upstairs, and I get the wa-na-gi out of Leelian's krunk, and I poot it in the stove. And it burn. And — and — it smell very. Now the ghost will walk no more. Ve-r-r-y st-e-e-ll in her grave will the great-grandmawther lie. And very fast will Leelian get well. Now I have tell you a nice story about the wa-na-gi, and back to bed I shall go and be ponished."

She slipped from the missionary's knee and made a quick retreat.

"No doubt she has done as she says," said Mr. Averill; "the weird little gipsy seldom makes mistakes."

"It is well if the troublesome lock has been burned by accident," the missionary said.

Mr. Averill stepped into the dormitory and convinced himself that the lock had really been destroyed. A remnant of the bag was shriveling on the brands, and a mingled odor from the contents filled the dormitory. He moved the remnant to a hotter place, then closed the stove door and raised the window. He retired in relief.

When Lilian awoke, Mrs. Averill was by her bed.

"It is all clear about last night's affair," she hastened to relieve the little sufferer's mind. "Clark has been over to explain, and he will tell the two schools, who will meet here with the teachers after dinner for the purpose."

"Oh, poor Clark," said Lilian, knowing well the ordeal it would be.

"Rather poor Lilian and poor Indian girls," substituted Mrs. Averill. "Don't worry, dear," she laid a soothing hand upon the quivering eyelids, "he will learn the hard lesson well, and be the better for the discipline."

The gathering in the schoolroom was quietly

effected, and the pupils had no inkling of its object. They supposed, however, that the missionary was to talk to them, and he did — concerning the mistake of a belief in ghosts. When he had closed his brief but earnest talk, Clark was summoned to the platform by a look from Mr. Averill. He had made no notes of what he wished to say, but he spoke with readiness, although there was a noticeable absence of his usual robust color.

"I'm very sorry to say that I've been frightening the girls by playing ghost with a Jack-o'-lantern," he began.

"Tokee!" was the astonished whisper through the room, betokening that he had riveted the quick attention of the pupils.

"I don't suppose the girls and boys have ever seen a Jack-o'-lantern, for there haven't been any pumpkins till this fall since I've been here, owing to the long drought," he digressed a little to remark. "A Jack-o'-lantern is made by digging out the inside of a pumpkin and cutting holes for the eyes and nose and mouth, and there's a light inside to make it look as if it had a fiery face. I shall illustrate presently," in a slightly discoursive tone. "I dressed up in a sheet, and held the Jack-o'-lantern on a stick to make it look like a head, and bent over when I walked, and whistled by blowing into a bottle."

There was another whisper of surprise at these inventions of a frightful nature, which the Indian girls and boys had never heard of.

"Since the first night I played ghost I've had the Jack-o'-lantern wrapped in the sheet and hidden under the old log barn down on the range. The first time I had a good chance, for I had been invited here to a social,— and that's the way I abused the mission's hospitality. The other boys weren't here, and the teachers of the boys' school thought I was spending the evening here and behaving myself. Last night they thought I was studying in my room, but I locked the door and climbed out on the roof of the ell and went down the fire-escape, and raced over and back, and was studying again when Mr. Greely knocked on the door after Mr. Averill came. I thought if any one knocked while I was gone and tried to look in, they'd think I'd locked my door to take a nap, or something else."

He told in a few words, though he could scarcely trust himself, how he stumbled into a post-hole, and was caught by Lilian, how he hurried down the bluff and jumped upon his pony, racing down the flats and then across the prairie. He concluded, with a penitent look at the missionary: —

"I thought it would be great fun to disturb the school by playing ghost when the missionary was here, and I couldn't get rid of the idea, though I

knew it was very rascally. I'm sorry, as I said before, and I ask the missionary, and Mr. Averill, and Mr. Greely, and all the teachers, and the girls and boys, to forgive me."

As Clark finished his confession he stopped to take breath, gathering strength for the remainder of the ordeal. There was the deepest silence in the schoolroom. Added to the girls' and boys' surprise at his disclosure was their wonder at his most unusual manner, and their admiration of his power to extemporize upon so grave a subject on the public platform. The industrial teacher, who had wept at Clark's erratic cookery, now wiped her eyes in sympathy for his affliction.

When the girls and boys had been prepared for the peculiar exhibition, Clark produced the Jack-o'-lantern, to convince them quite beyond a doubt of their delusion. He had made a new one for the purpose, as he had destroyed the one with which he had performed the masquerade, having finished his career as a practical joker in the spectral line.

The sculptured pumpkin that had wrought such mischief was concealed beneath a shawl upon the floor beside the organ. The eyes were all agog to see the curiosity, but when it came forth, with its staring eyes and yellow skin, scraggly yellow teeth, a flash of the delusion struck the girls anew,

and they recoiled in momentary fright. Jane lost herself and cried excitedly :—

"Ee-ah! Tokee! the fire-ghost's haid! Leelian, catch it and they cut it off and poot it on a steek." She sprang up in alarm.

"Sit down, Jane, and be quiet," Mr. Averill requested calmly.

Clark struck a match and lit the candle inside, explaining with another discoursive touch: "The Jack-o'-lantern does not have the same appearance in the daytime as at night, because the light does not show off so well — I should say ill."

Then came the climax of the fearful ordeal. Clark put on the sheet, adjusted the Jack-o'-lantern, bent himself and walked across the stage, whistling in the bottle.

He emerged as soon as possible, and with an unexpected movement dropped the Jack-o'-lantern on the sheet upon the floor and desperately stamped upon it, crushing it to piecemeals. Then he mopped the perspiration from his face and took his seat.

Mr. Averill then arose.

"It is now all explained, and the girls and boys are sure there is no ghost," he said. "I think we all believe that Clark is sorry, and are ready to forgive him. I will tell the girls and boys that Alomina burned the lock of hair from Lilian's

trunk this morning. Alomina is a very little girl, and she must be excused for meddling with what was not her own. The pupils may pass out."

Thus was the perplexing matter of the ghost-lock easily disposed of by the twin, and the school no longer groaned beneath a burden of responsibility in sheltering it.

When the usual order of affairs was resumed at the boys' school, Clark was summoned into Mr. Greely's presence. He approached another interview with dread, for he was smarting from the wounds he had received that morning. He had made all possible concessions, and he bore himself a little stiffly as he stepped into the office. He was asked to sit, but he preferred to stand. He placed himself some distance from the superintendent and respectfully awaited what he had to say.

"I was at fault this morning," Mr. Greely soberly confessed, as he arose. "I lost my temper and spoke harshly. I am forced to admit that my hasty disposition is a source of great anxiety to me. I regret my refusal to accept your acknowledgment, and my distrust of your intentions, and I trust, my boy, that you will make an effort to forget my bitter words and my severity in turning the key upon you."

Clark was moved to double penitence by this unlooked-for friendliness.

"I deserved it all, and much more," he answered, struggling to command his voice. "It would not be easy to express my own opinion of myself. I've been allowed more liberty than the Indian boys, and I've abused your trust and proved myself more unreliable than they."

"We are satisfied with the reparation you have made, and I shall continue to trust you," Mr. Greely said.

He laid a kindly hand upon Clark's shoulder, and the boy passed out.

When he had shut himself into his room, Clark stood before his mother's photograph upon the mantel for a little. Then he sat down by the table. His geometry lay open, and he leaned his arm across the book and dropped his head upon it. When he raised his face the page was wet with tears.

Lilian did not leave her bed for days. When she was able to sit up without the singular dizziness which had attended her prostration, she was by the window in the afternoon, while the girls were all in school. The entertaining school baby kept her company. He was sitting on the broad arm of her easy chair, and they had their heads together looking from the window, when she saw Clark riding up. She drew back roguishly, and peeped behind the muslin curtain to observe his movements.

There appeared to be no watcher all along the

line, and he stopped his pony at the fence below her window, looking up. His anxious face struck pity to her heart. She suddenly bent forward and disclosed herself, and smiled and waved her hand. He whirled his hat and tossed it in the air, and thereupon displayed a little rubber ball, imploring her by signs to raise the window. She assented, and he said in undertone: —

"Ho, Lily! Overjoyed to see you up. Any one there but you and Bertie?"

"No," she said.

"Then catch the ball. There's something in it. No, you'll miss it. Let me throw it in."

Lilian drew aside and he threw the ball into the room. It landed on the floor.

"I'll have to shut the window now. Good-by," she called softly.

"Wait a wink," he said, and looked about on all sides.

"Ho, Bertie! catch this," he exclaimed in smothered tones, and threw a cautious kiss.

Then he raced away.

Bertram brought the ball, and Lilian found a little note had been slipped through an opening into it. She read it with a deal of sympathy.

"Poor Little White Lily: —

"I'm a double-dyed villain of the blackest hue.

The dictionary fails to describe my remorse. I don't expect you to approve of me, but try to forgive me just a little bit. Don't answer. Correspondence not allowed. Show this to Mrs. Averill if your conscience pricks.

"Wretchedly yours,

"CLARKSON."

Mrs. Averill came in presently and heard surprising news from Bertram. He revealed it in the dialect of his little Indian nurses, who were very proud of their success in teaching the school baby to express himself.

"Leely poosh up weendow. Clock throw ball. Clock throw Bertram kees. Leely get paper out of ball. Leely read paper."

"Oh, you precious little reporter!" Lilian exclaimed, giving Bertram a delighted hug. "But I was going to show it to the white mother, anyhow. Clark said I might." She gave the note to Mrs. Averill.

"You may keep it as a bit of confidence belonging to yourself," said Mrs. Averill, returning it unread. "We think it not best to have the boys and girls write notes to one another, but, owing to the circumstances, this may be excused."

"I'm glad he threw the kiss at Bertram," Lilian said punctiliously. "Our heads were right to-

gether, and I couldn't quite have told, if he hadn't called baby's name. Of course it would have been against the rule if it hadn't been for Bertram."

"Yes, dear, quite so," Mrs. Averill answered, with a spark of laughter in her eyes.

CHAPTER XXI.

ALPHONSO.

THE large and middle-sized girls were mostly in the sewing-room this Saturday afternoon, finishing the flannel frocks for winter, which was close at hand. The small girls' sewing class was in the schoolroom, interested in a patchwork quilt. The little girls, too young to sew, were playing in the yard.

Lilian and Inez were not sewing, as the last stitch had been taken in their frocks the afternoon before, so they went upon the bluff to watch for Clark and Mario, who had passed the mission early after dinner, on their way to the boat. The boys had gone across the river to a ranch behind the hills, with word from Mr. Greely as to an amount of hay he wished to have delivered at the boys' school when the river was frozen over.

"There, they are rowing back," said Lilian. "I'm glad they're coming, for the wind is rising, and the river will be very rough."

The wind was from the north, and very keen. Lilian and Inez pulled their knit caps close about their ears, and buttoned their jackets, and sat

down to watch the sturdy progress of the boys across the treacherous river.

"When the wind blows hard on the river, and the water goes up high and down low very fast, my mother says the wind-makers and the water-monster are fighting," Inez said. "The water-monster has seven heads, and only one eye in each head, and a very too hideous horn right in the middle of each forehead. It is so very horrid that whoever sees it goes crazy and dies. When a boat tips over and the people drown, it is because the water-monster opens its seven mouths and sucks so hard it draws them in and swallows them."

"That must mean because there are so many dangerous whirls in the river," Lilian said. "You don't really believe it, do you, Inez?"

"I try not to, but sometimes I do," said Inez. "We were all afraid of the water-monster when we went for the wah-kon, but Louise said it was because our conscience pinched us. When I am with the teachers, I am sure the Indian stories are not true; but when I am with the Indians, so very hard it is not to think the Indian thoughts. But since Clark told about the Jack-o'-lantern, and the twin burned the ghost-lock, I am not so scared of ghosts."

"I'm glad the lock was burned," said Lilian.

"Aunt Losa was a good deal worried when she came to see if the report was true, but Mr. Averill talked with her and she felt much better."

Inez did not answer, for her eyes were turned toward a horseman coming down the river trail. She watched him keenly for a little while, then she was seized with great excitement.

"It's Alphonso!" she exclaimed, and started down the bluff.

Lilian flew after her, not knowing why.

Alphonso urged his pony with all possible speed, but the animal appeared to be exhausted and was limping badly.

Inez ran to meet her brother, who was riding toward the landing, and as he dismounted hastily she caught him by the arm.

"Ee — Alphonso — why are you so fast and pale?" she cried. "Is there danger back of you?"

"Yes," replied Alphonso, with a hunted look. "Fast after me they come, and Fire Hawk can run no more. I wish to reach the fort. Ee — ah — the wrist — you twist it and a thing is ailing it," as Inez wrung his hand in terror. "Fire Hawk fell top of me and lamed himself and broke the wrist. Is there a horse? But there'll be no time to change."

Alphonso much resembled Mario and Inez. He

was tall, well formed, and agile — every inch a bold young plainsman. He was used to wild adventure, but he now looked about in dazed alarm.

"Ee! the bean does not like me!" Inez cried; "I did not get my wish, but I will put it in your pocket; it may like you."

And she hurriedly transferred the medicine bean from her own pocket to Alphonso's.

"Oh!" said Lilian, "Mr. Averill and Mrs. Averill are at the fort, and Dolphus is off hunting beeves. Only three teachers and the girls are here — but we will lock you in the pantry. Come quick!"

"No; the think-room, upstairs," Inez said. "Run, run!"

She seized his other hand, and tried to pull him forward.

"No," refused Alphonso; "they would raid the house and care not. They are drunk on Pixley's whisky. I have proof against the Pixleys, and they are afraid of me. A very bad policeman they have hired to get after me, and he is drunker than the cowboys. If I should give myself up they would take me off and shoot me, and he would report he had to, for I was unruly."

Inez clung to him in pale-faced horror.

Meanwhile, Clark and Mario were pulling to the shore with quick, hard strokes. They surmised,

from the excited manner of Alphonso and the girls, that some catastrophe was in the wind.

"If I can get across the river I shall then be safe," Alphonso said. He watched the boys with feverish hope. Then he looked about and added, in despair, "But the wretches will get after me, there is the other boat."

"They cannot use that, it is leaky," Inez said.

She waved her hands in frantic urgency to Clark and Mario.

The boys were in the boat belonging to their school. The mission boat, a less substantial skiff, quite apt to be disabled, was laid by on the sands for repairs.

Clark and Mario reached the landing in short order.

"Ho, Alphonso! what's the rumpus?" puffed Clark, scant for breath from his exertions.

"Do not leave the boat," begged Inez; "you must row right back with him; his wrist is broken and he cannot hold the oar. Ee-ah! they come — the beasts that are so drunk — fast after him. We see them up the river. Now I hear them whoop."

"Aunt Jemima! Hop in quick!" exclaimed Clark, straightening his oars.

"Tokee!" cried Mario. "The wolves that howl, the hawks that scream, the snakes that hiss — all drunk with whisky. We shall see if they

will catch Alphonso." And he grasped his brother's arm to help him in.

The boat pushed off, while Clark called back, "Run, girls, to the house; don't wait an instant."

Fire Hawk was standing still upon the sands. Inez seized his bridle, urging him along the flats until a path which led up to the grounds was reached. She tied the pony to a post inside the fence, then she and Lilian sought the shelter of a log pen, perched upon the bluff within the grounds, to watch the upshot of the startling event.

The maudlin party, five in number, reached the landing, uttering appalling whoops as they watched the boat a moment. Then the sound of shots was heard.

"Oh, they're firing at them!" Lilian said; "Look, Inez — you have sharper eyes — can they reach them with the shots? Do you see Clark sitting up? I think I don't."

She dashed her hand against her eyes to clear away a sudden blur.

"Just then I did not, but just now I do. Ee! see him wave his hat at them."

All the shots appeared to fall short, for the boat had made good headway, but the party kept on firing till they had spent a deal of ammunition. Then they rode back to the brush and straggled to the ground to tie their horses.

"Why," said Lilian presently, "they're going back to take the leaky boat, I do believe. I should think they'd stop to see if it is safe."

"Tokee! the whisky will not let them stop to see," said Inez. "Look, they push it to the water. They will load it down with five. The tall, young beast that walks with one leg shorter than the other is Joe Pixley. And the short one with the red shirt is Tobias Pixley. Ee! Joe Pixley gets in first!"

"Clark thought the Pixleys wouldn't dare do anything themselves," said Lilian.

"But there is a policeman to excuse them," Inez said. "A policeman can do anything, and very hard it is to prove that he has not the right. But they cannot get Alphonso. They will sink the boat; the Pixleys will be drowned, and I am glad — glad — glad!"

She started to her feet and swung her arms in exultation as the boat pushed out. Her black eyes glistened with a vengeful fire; her breath came pantingly between her riveted white teeth and parted lips.

"O Inez, dear, you mustn't think such thoughts; they are so very, very wrong!" said Lilian, recoiling from the wild mood of the beautiful young fury.

Lilian arose and watched the hazardous pursuit

with Inez, from above the logs. The boat had not gone very far when Inez cried: —

"Now, three of them are dipping water with their hats. Joe Pixley has stopped steering and is helping. He and Tobe are not so drunk as the policeman and the other two, for the whisky does not craze the half-breeds as it does the full-bloods. Ee! I hope the hats are very ragged and will not hold water," with no lessening of the vengeful mood.

"Oh," said Lilian, paling at their danger, "why don't they row back very fast? They couldn't swim, the water is so swift and muddy."

"The water-monster will get them!" triumphed Inez. "I am now believing that there is a water-monster. I am glad there is. I wish for him to swallow them. I hope he will open his seven mouths v-e-r-r-y w-i-i-d-e, and suck v-e-r-r-y h-a-r-r-d! Tokee! how fast they dip!"

"Oh, there is the sand-bar," Lilian presently exclaimed. "That is why they didn't turn back — they can reach the sand-bar sooner — they are near it," she rejoiced.

"It is quicksand," Inez said.

She laughed and clapped her hands.

"I forgot that," Lilian said, with a new anxiety. "Oh, see," she added shortly, "they have landed and are pulling up the boat."

Inez's fire and fury suddenly subsided into smouldering bitterness.

"You want the drunk beasts to get Alphonso," she reproached Lilian in bated breath; "you would not care if they should take him to the range and shoot him with so many bullets. Ee! I think that you would like to see my brother lying dead and very lots of blood all round him."

Lilian shivered, but she passed a soothing arm around the girl.

"See," she said, "the boys have landed safely, and Alphonso can go down the trail and cross back on the ferry to the fort. If his wrist is broken, I am sure the surgeon will attend to it, and he'll be taken care of."

"Ee! the bean likes Alphonso," Inez cried, in great relief.

"The men are getting back into the boat," said Lilian; "I hope they'll stay very still."

"I am an Indian, and I am not good," said Inez, yielding somewhat to the influence of the gentle white girl, whom she loved; "I am very black tempered, like my skin. I hate my brother's enemies, but I will try to wish they will only get into prison."

"Oh," said Lilian, looking round, "there is Dolphus; I will run and tell him," and she met the young farmer at the well.

She explained the situation while he pumped the water for his horse. When he had filled the tub, he dropped the handle of the pump, shoved his hat aside, and scratched his head in calm surprise.

"That's the best place in the univarse for them to come adrift of," he observed, upon deliberation. "If the gover'ment could settle all the full-blood and mixed-blood rascals onto sand-bars, it could let the decent Injuns run, and there wouldn't need to be a standin' army on the pay-roll to keep watch o' the Injun problem. True, the sand-bars shift round consider'ble, but the vagabonds are used to bein' on the move."

"Oh, but they are on the quicksand-bar," said Lilian, much troubled by the young farmer's unconcern.

"The quicker the better," reasoned Dolphus, unchecking his horse's head. "The torpid scoundrels need a quickenin' elerment o' some sort otherwise than deviltry. It takes the average full-blood Injun — when he ain't out on a killin' fracas — till the cows come home to git his foot raised up and git it down agin, to make the circuit of a step. And the mixed-bloods ain't much quicker."

"O Dolphus, please do something!" Lilian begged at random. "Go for Mr. Greely and the boys — I'll run and ask the teachers to dismiss the sewing classes."

"Certainly, Miss Lilian — jest the thing. And seein' that there ain't no boat this side, and Clark and Mario can't be expected to be courtin' danger from another charge o' bullets by rowin' to the rescue of the scamps, the two schools and the teachers can string out along the sand and cheer 'em with a sympathetic gaze. It might embarrass sensitive nerves in their peculiar fix, but you can't stare a full-blood or a mixed-blood out o' countenance, especially if they've been imbibin' freely."

Then the young farmer, seeing Lilian's distress, dropped his moderate sarcasm to assure her thus: —

"If they ain't too boozy, they'll hev sense enough to set still in the boat and not go circumnambulatin' round the bar. The boat will hold 'em up. The little steamer's comin' round the bend, with some army fellers that's been stoppin' at the agency a day or two — so a cowboy from the agency jest told me on the fort road. Very likely it will take the scamps on board and land 'em in the guard-house at the fort."

"Colonel Mayo!" Lilian exclaimed. "Mrs. Frisbie told me, when I visited her last Sunday, that they were expecting him this week."

She ran back to the bluff.

The sewing hour was just up, and the classes heard the stirring tidings from the children, who

had gathered round the pump to listen. In a twinkling all about the school, including Dolphus and the teachers, were upon the bluffs. A game of ball was being played upon the other hill, hence the boys were not abroad to witness the exciting spectacle.

The little steamer now appeared in sight, whistling a cheery greeting to the mission.

The discomfited raiders seemed to realize their situation and were remaining quietly in the boat. Joe Pixley signaled to the steamer. As may be supposed, it gathered in the party in short order.

Clark, and Mario, and Alphonso had descried the steamer coming round the bend and had awaited its approach. Clark tied his handkerchief upon an oar and raised it as a signal.

The little vessel had its interest excited by the two unusual bespeakings, which appeared to be connected in a way that needed some investigation, and the boys were likewise gathered in. Clark and Mario, with their boat in tow, were brought across the windy river, which was now too rough for rowing, and were landed further down the bank. Alphonso passed on to the fort.

"All quiet along the Missouri to-night," Dolphus said to Lilian, when the startling event was over. "'Twas the best circus of the season, an' the wild beasts didn't git the upper hands. I'll turn the

horses left without their riders through the bars into the pasture, and I hope I'll be here when the owners come to claim their property, five of them, at least."

Lilian met Clark at the stile as he came to get his pony, which was tied inside the grounds.

"Alphonso is in luck, for all he has a broken wrist," he said. "The agent happened to be on the steamboat with the officers. He's going back overland, and he'll take the vigilance committee under guard. Alphonso has the written statement of a member of the cattle-thieving gang telling who the guilty fellows are. The writer of the statement died last week of quick consumption, at Alphonso's house — he was a sort of relative, and he cleared his conscience by a full confession. He had a first-rate education, for a full-blood cowboy, but he slid back after leaving school. Alphonso shook the paper in Joe Pixley's face, and hinted that the British sailor and his sons were on a slippery side-hill, and that brought matters to a head. 'Twas fun to see how meek the Pixleys and the other fellows were before the agent. He's the king of the reservation, and they weren't too drunk to know it. The policeman will lose his government blue and brass buttons, most likely."

"I'm glad for Alphonso," Lilian said. "Why, Clark," she suddenly exclaimed, "there's some-

thing red on your hair! Oh, Clark, did they hit you?"

"Just a skin-graze, Lily. Don't be scared the least bit. The bullet rooted up a little patch of hair and skipped into the water. It isn't necessary to consult a surgeon."

"Oh, I hope it isn't worse than you tell me," Lilian trembled. "That was when we didn't see you sitting up."

"Yes; I bobbed in cowardly surprise, imagining there were a dozen bullets in my skull," laughed Clark. He pulled his hat down low to hide the blood-stain on his side locks.

"Do come in and let me see just how it is and put a plaster on it," she besought him.

"No; excuse me, Lily," he implored. "It makes a fellow feel grotesque to have a scary girl coddling him, in public, for a mere scratch."

The wound was really slight.

"I saw Colonel Mayo on the boat. No wonder you are all smashed up with him. It's good for weak eyes to set them on a military chap like him."

"I don't suppose I'll have a chance to see him," Lilian sighed.

CHAPTER XXII.

GOOD-NIGHT AND GOOD-BY.

LILIAN had set her room in order, had distributed the children's Sunday clothes and assisted in the work of dressing them, after which she had put on her pretty mission dress and cap in readiness for Sunday school. The bell was ringing, and she was about to go below, when there came a quick tap at the door. She opened it to Mrs. Averill.

The young matron stepped into the room, taking Lilian's hands and holding them a moment.

"You are all dressed, looking quite as nice as usual," she said, inspecting her with some suppressed emotion. "Colonel Mayo is in the parlor and would like to see you; you may entertain him while we are in Sunday school. He wishes you to bring the little things." She kissed her softly on both cheeks. "Go quickly, dearie," then she turned and flitted from the room.

Lilian did not stop to lay aside her cap, but hastily took out the baby things and went below.

Colonel Mayo met her at the door. He looked her over, studying the sweet face, framed in reddish

hair beneath the chic little cap, with deep intensity. Her cheeks were rosy from some strange excitement, and her soft eyes had a wistful and half-startled look.

When he had held her in his gaze for an absorbing moment, with no speech at his command, he drew her to his side upon the lounge.

"Mrs. Frisbie has just told me of the baby things, — you have them here, and I may see them?" Then he took the little package from her hand.

He found the pin and held it up to view. The day was cloudy, and the lounge was in the shadow of a corner. He rose and moved it forward, sitting nearer to the window to inspect the pin minutely.

"Surely there could be no other of the same color and peculiar script, and mended in the same way," Lilian heard him murmur to himself. When he turned to her his face was pallid, and the large, strong hand that held the little gold bar trembled.

Next, he took the hair which Lilian had straightened thread by thread and tied into a little smooth curl with a knot of blue ribbon. He brought forth another little bright curl from his breast pocket and compared the two. Lilian saw that there was but a shade of difference — her's was just a trifle darker.

"There should be a tiny gray lock hidden in your hair on one side, a birthmark," he observed,

with difficulty; "if you will take off the cap, I will look for it."

She removed the cap in throbbing silence, and he passed his fingers through the thick, soft hair above one temple.

"No," she said, as in a dream, "the other side."

"Ah, yes; my memory was confused a moment," then he swept aside the hair from above the other temple. There he found the tiny lock.

In one bewildering instant Lilian was lifted like a little child and clasped in Colonel's Mayo's arms.

"Darling, I am papa; there is proof enough. Kiss me, baby — little one — my child."

Her arms went round his neck without a word. The strong man held her face to his and sobbed.

"Oh, you sweet, sweet papa, we have found each other!" Lilian said, when she could speak. Then she drew a long, deep, blissful sigh.

When he tried to tell her brokenly of how she had been lost, she stopped him with a half-shy, tremulous kiss.

"I know it, papa; Mrs. Frisbie — oh, she's Cousin Mabel! — told me. And I saw her picture — precious mamma's. Don't let's try to talk of it just now."

This was the brief, sad story Lilian had heard.

The young mother, pining for her husband, who

was on a campaign against the Indians in the Northwest, had journeyed from the East with her little daughter, to the frontier post to which he was expected to return in middle autumn. She had tried to cross the turbulent Missouri to the post at dusk, in a small boat, with a trusty oarsman and a young lieutenant as an escort, but the little party did not reach the other side. The boat was found upon a sand-bar several miles below by searchers from the post, and it was thought it had been swept into a whirlpool by a sudden burst of wind, and upset, and all were drowned. Captain Mayo had arrived with his command a few days later, to be stricken with the news of his bereavement.

The scene of the disaster was a long distance from the reservation Lilian had been brought to, and no tidings of his child had ever reached the father; but upon his visit to the school, Colonel Mayo had been drawn to Lilian, and she to him, by some indefinite influence which was now explained. How she came to be there was a mystery still — he only knew he had her safe in his sheltering arms.

"I suppose I have another name," said Lilian, when they were adjusted to the new situation and were talking with composure. "Miniwanca,— Lilian; I wonder what the other one can be?"

She held her breath in suspense.

"There isn't any," said her father. "We were so particular, we hadn't found a name; you were simply baby and darling, as I had the pin inscribed. We were waiting for the campaigns to be over, so we could decide the most important matter at our leisure," smiling, yet with irrepressible sadness, at her look of wonder.

"Shall you decide now — and let me help you? Wouldn't it be strange for a grown-up baby to be choosing a name for herself?" she mused.

"Suppose we keep the pretty school name? You will feel more at home in that."

"Oh, I'm glad," she said. "Dear Mrs. Hildreth named me Lilian. Mr. Hildreth used to rock me to sleep, papa."

"I'll telegraph my thanks. I envy him the memory of that sleepy little head against his breast," the colonel answered, while he claimed his privilege with the wide-awake young head.

"I shouldn't know myself in a new name — in a new place." Lilian held her breath again, thinking of the beautiful far-away whither she was going with her father. Yet the parting from the dear mission was to be — and there was Clark — she gave a little start.

"When must I say good-by?" she asked, with a tremor of the voice.

"Within three days. I hope they haven't

nursed you into such a brownie of the plains that you will dread to go with me," he said, with some anxiety. As yet, he was uncertain just how closely this strange life among the Indian children had entwined itself about her.

"No; the reason why I have to say good-by is so happy," and she clung to him anew. "Though, of course, it will be sad to say it."

"I must take you to the fort at once. Cousin Mabel and Lieutenant Dick are waiting very anxiously to hear from us. I will bring you back to say good-by."

"Well, Sunday school is out. I hear the girls. I'll speak to Mrs. Averill and Mr. Averill. Did you tell them you thought I was your long-lost baby?"

"Not directly, but they must have judged it — I was in surprising haste," he smiled.

Lilian ran upstairs and tapped at Mrs. Averill's door. Mr. Averill opened it. He saw the joy in her face, and a responsive joy lit up his own.

"It is all true, Margaret," he said, in quick, glad tones — "the child has found her father."

He took the fair little hand and led her to his wife.

The school baby sat upon his mother's lap. "Leely hug Bertram," he demanded, stretching up his arms.

Lilian knelt upon the floor and hugged the

school baby and the young white mother in one clasp. The superintendent stood above them, looking down with misty eyes.

"Ruth," said Mrs. Averill to the middle-sized girl who had stayed with Bertram during Sunday school, and was standing by in wonder, "Lilian has found her father; he is Colonel Mayo. You may tell the teachers and the girls — spread the glad news very quickly! Shall we ring a joy-bell, Herbert?" smiling through her tears.

Ruth ran to tell the wondrous news.

Lilian went into her room to pack the hand-bag Mrs. Averill gave her,— ah, how strange the need of it! — while Mr. Averill and his wife went down to joyfully congratulate the father.

"You have taken good care of my little daughter," Colonel Mayo said, when the hearty hand-grasps were exchanged. "I shall not seek to express my gratitude in words."

"She has been very dear to us," said Mrs. Averill. "We shall miss her sadly."

"We have tried to guard her tenderly the short time we have had her in our care," said Mr. Averill, "but the credit of her careful bringing up is due to our predecessors, who reared her as their own child, from a tiny maid of six."

"Where may I reach these friends with a telegram?" asked Colonel Mayo.

"They are at a health resort in California." Mr. Averill gave the address. "Very many workers in the Indian cause find themselves at health resorts, sooner or later," he regretted.

"My niece tells me that this is a memorial school," said Colonel Mayo. "As a slight expression of our gratitude, we would be glad to have you take an Indian child in Lilian's place, at our expense. It will give my daughter great joy to provide for her child."

"Oh," said Mrs. Averill, "we will take the little wild girl that came from her grandmother's teepe last week, and we had to send back, won't we, Herbert? Lilian shed some sympathetic tears because we couldn't keep her."

"Yes; the little wild maid shall be the little fair girl's memorial child," said Mr. Averill, huskily.

It was very chilly out of doors, and the girls, not getting dinner, were assembled in the warm music-room, when Ruth brought in the news. After the excitement which arose from hearing it, there came a thoughtful lull.

"Now she will care for us no more," said Inez; "we are Indian girls — she is a white girl. She will go East with the handsome soldier man who is her father, and how fast she will be very proud indeed."

"She will live in a beeg frame house that is not

log, and she will wear a seelk dress all the time," predicted Jane. "If she should scrub the floor, a velvet scrub-rag she would have; but she will not scrub, for she does not at the mission, only dust the chairs and awther furneeture. Of course a velvet dust-rag she will have."

"If we should go to Carlisle, and stop to see the big city," brooded Inez, "she would see us in the road, — no, Katy says it is a street, — and she would say to the white girls that were walking with her, all dressed up, 'Tokee! there are some Indian girls; are they not very too funny? See how black they are. Do they not walk like rabbits? Look! they hang their heads and act so scared. Ee! how I hate the Indians!' And she would laugh at us, and the other white girls would laugh, too."

"Lilian would not laugh at us!" cried Katy, in warm defense. "She knows we are just as God made us, and we cannot help being Indians. The Indians have been good to her, and she does not hate them — there are many that she loves. Some white girls would be very proud, but Lilian will not be."

"O Inez, dear, how can you have such thoughts of me?" said Lilian, as she slipped into the circle, having entered unawares. She gave a little sob. "But you are only talking, and you don't believe

it, do you? I shall always love the dear mission and the dear girls."

"Ee! I do not know if you will," said Inez, with a desolate little cry. "I am very cross and jealous, and I do not wish to have you go so far off with the soldier father. Never again shall we see you." The Spanish-Indian girl could not suppress her tears.

"Yes, you will, all who go to Carlisle or Hampton. I shall go to the schools to see you, and I shall love to have you visit me — so will papa."

"Ee! she calls him pawpaw," whispered Jane, in awe. "Just like she is not afraid of the tall soldier-man, so soon."

"I shall go to Carlisle next year," said Inez, comforted by Lilian's pledge of eternal friendship, and the hope of seeing her again.

"I shall go, too," said Hester.

"I, too," said Louise; "and Sarah says she shall go and cultivate her sing, as Mr. Averill and Mrs. Averill wish."

"I shall go back to Hampton," Katy said. "My mother had not seen me since I was a very short girl, so she could not let me stay. I sent a string to tell her how long I was, but she could not quite see how I looked from that. Now, she will let me go back. Ee! how very too nice it will be

to visit Lilian!" Katy's soft eyes glowed. "But she will write to those who cannot go," she added, looking round upon the wistful faces of the little brown maids who would never be allowed to go beyond the reservation.

"Yes, indeed, such long, long letters," Lilian said.

"I am leetle, but I can spik English," piped the twin, hanging on to Lilian's skirts. "And I can go to Cowlisle. I shall go to Cowlisle last year, and I shall veesit Leelian, for I love her very."

"You are much too short to go to Cowlisle," said Jane. "Only those that are long and meedle-sized can go."

"I shall eat very beeg and fast grow long," resolved the twin. "Then, of course, I shall go to Cowlisle."

The news went flying to the other hill quite early in the afternoon. Clark heard it and retired to his room. He locked the door and pulled the shades down, then he danced the chairs about, and tossed the pillows in the air, and even turned a somersault, endangering the lamp upon the mantel by the play of his exuberant legs. When he had spent his joy for Lilian, he raised the shades and sat down thoughtfully. He passed an hour or more in sober meditation, then he spoke with Mr. Greely, and was soon upon the road that wound beyond the buttes.

The next evening he sat in Mrs. Frisbie's parlor He had brought a roll of little garments — the remainder of the baby things — from the ranch-house, whither he had gone to see his uncle and Aunt Losa. A little gray coat and a lace hood, lined with eiderdown, were recognized by Colonel Mayo as the clothes which he had seen his little daughter wear before he left her and her mother with his sister in the East, while he went upon the campaign.

Clark had gathered from Aunt Losa that the little garments had been placed in a stone jar and hidden in a hole in the bluff-side, and had been removed to the ranch-house by Aunt Losa after Mother Swift Bird's death, by her request.

When Lilian had gone upstairs with Mrs. Frisbie, and Lieutenant Dick had stepped out on a bit of business, Colonel Mayo said to Clark: —

"I hope, my boy, you understand how fully we appreciate your favor in recovering the little things. It has saved us a journey to the ranch for the purpose of interviewing the Indian woman — your — aunt."

The courteous officer, in spite of his intention to the contrary, spoke the last word with luckless hesitation, and a slight stress. It was difficult for him to regulate the thought that this attractive youth, of high-bred lineament, possessed a full-blood Indian aunt.

Clark flushed from chin to temples at the unintentional regret expressed by Colonel Mayo; then he held his head up firmly, even haughtily, and gave the officer a straight look in the eyes.

"My — aunt," he laid the same slight stress upon the word, "will be at the mission to-morrow afternoon, with the hope of seeing Lilian, of whom she is very fond. I am sorry my — uncle" — another slight stress — "will not accompany his — wife. If you will take Lilian to call upon my — aunt — in the — teepe — it will give her great pleasure. She is an excellent woman."

"I shall be most happy. Lilian seems very fond of your aunt," the colonel said, with the suspicion of a smile. Then the grave look wonted to his face came back.

"Did you learn anything whatever as to how my little daughter came into the Indian family's possession?" he inquired.

"Yes," said Clark, as if in answer to a dreaded question; "Swift Bird bought her with a famous racing pony, from an Indian who had come from another reservation, at a distance."

"Was that all you learned?" said Colonel Mayo, scrutinizing Clark with such intensity that he was forced to answer fully.

"No — I don't like to tell you — but the boat was not upset — by accident. There were other

boats on the river — Indian boats. The Indians were hostiles stealing down the river. They took — Lily — the child — from the boat" — Clark labored for his breath — "and then — you understand the rest. The others were not saved."

Colonel Mayo leaned upon the stand close by, and braced his forehead with his hands. The fire crackled in the grate, the cuckoo clock chimed softly, while he struggled with his grief. When, at length, he turned to Clark, the boy was startled by his haggard look.

"My little daughter must not know of this. How did your aunt secure the knowledge?"

"From her sister — Swift Bird's wife. Swift Bird knew about the whole thing. The man who sold him the child boasted of it, but he never told the Indians' names, even to his wife."

Lilian and Mrs. Frisbie now came downstairs, talking brightly.

"Was there ever anything more lovely than that you are Cousin Mabel?" Lilian said.

"Yes — that you are Cousin Lilian!" laughed the bride. "You will take my place with mamma, and I sha'n't be crying, on the sly, because my dear one is lonely. Why, Uncle Leverett, how pale you are! Have you a happy headache, from all the glad excitement? Can't we help you? Wouldn't you like something?"

"Yes," said Colonel Mayo wearily, as he left his chair to seat himself upon the lounge. "I would like to have my two girls on either side, and Clark may move his chair nearer."

Daughter and niece drew close to him, and took possession of his large, strong, tender hands, and presently the pallor left his face.

Clark took leave in time to reach the school by bed-time. He had managed to convey to Lilian his desire to see her on the porch a minute, and as Mrs. Frisbie chatted at the door with him, Lilian murmured to the colonel, "Papa, dear, Clark wants to speak with me — alone. I'm afraid he wants to say good-by. May I please go out on the porch a very little while?"

The colonel was a bit startled, but he was unable to resist this first sweet plea for his permission from his child.

"Yes, darling, anything you wish, of course. But wouldn't you better see the boy in here? The rest of us can step into another room, if there seems to be occasion."

"Oh, no, it's just for a minute," she said. "Now the stars shine, and very too lovely it will be outdoors," with a tincture of the speech and accent of her Indian mates.

She wound a scarf of Cousin Mabel's round her head and shoulders, and went out beneath the beautiful Dakota sky.

Lieutenant Dick was sitting near the colonel, and he gave a soft whistle as she disappeared.

"She's an unconventional little witch — seems to run in the family. I hope she won't lose that delicious bit of idiom and accent. If you ever get firm with her, colonel, she'll purl that Dakota music in your ear, and you'll surrender in a jiffy."

Mrs. Frisbie had gone through the hall into the sitting-room, and she now came in with pensive eyes.

"Isn't it pathetic that those precious little ones are out there saying good-by forever?" she observed.

The colonel stirred uneasily; Lieutenant Dick gave another soft whistle.

"Don't you believe it" — under his breath — "where there's a will there's a way."

"He seems to be a manly sort of lad," debated the colonel.

"What's the matter with Clark? Nothing. He's all right!" laughed Lieutenant Dick, "since the Jack-o'-lantern scrape — comes of a fine family. Captain Lathrop knew of them in Wisconsin. The father finished his education in Berlin. Invented something of importance, but another man stole the profits and is getting rich. Clark's mother was superb," the captain says.

"It's unfortunate about his uncle," Colonel Mayo said.

"Very — disappointed hopes — Lathrop thinks Clark feels it keenly — he's a proud young scamp."

"So I judged," said the colonel.

Clark had borne himself with dignified composure, for the most part, through the evening, but he now spoke hurriedly.

"It's good-night and good-by. You won't see me among the mourners that say good-by at the mission. I didn't think the colonel would give me a chance to speak to you. I just want to tell you that you needn't be afraid I'll carry out my reckless threat to take to the range or the Bad Lands." He gave a slight laugh at the absurdity.

"Oh, that was troubling me," said Lilian, in relief. "I couldn't be too happy on account of it. What will you do, stay here in school?"

"Not for ten thousand worlds! The plains aren't wide enough to hold me after you are gone. I'm going back to the ranch in the morning, and am going East to school in a week or so. Uncle Seth has talked a little for the first time in our acquaintance. He has been helping father's partner carry on the infringement case, and they won it some time ago. I've just found out. The man that stole the profits has had to disgorge, and

the invention is now on a paying basis. Uncle Seth says I won't be forced to adorn the ranks of the cowboys from a pecuniary press, and he's in favor of my going to college."

"Oh, how lovely that you're going East, too," rejoiced Lilian. "Of course you'll come to see me often."

"Not for five years — till I am twenty-one, and you are twenty. Maybe not then," he replied.

"O Clark, why not till then?" in startled wonder.

"'Twill take me all that time to get over being cowboyish. Then, if I am graduated in good shape, and there is nothing in the way, I'm coming to talk with your father."

"Oh, with papa!" Lilian murmured, with a queer little twinge of puzzled jealousy. "But, of course, you'll talk with me, too. I should think so, when you haven't seen me for five years," she grieved.

"Perhaps, when I have talked with the colonel. Don't forget me, Lily," pleadingly. "Yes,— forget me if you want to!" sternly. "Now run in," commandingly, "your father will be wondering. Good-night and good-by," huskily.

In a flash she heard the pony dashing down the fort road to the range.

Lilian drew a fluttering sigh, and then she smiled up at the stars.

"Of course I shall find out where he goes to school, and very too surely I shall have him spend the Christmas holidays with us," she told the stars, in dulcet imitation of the twin.

The stars twinkled knowingly.

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